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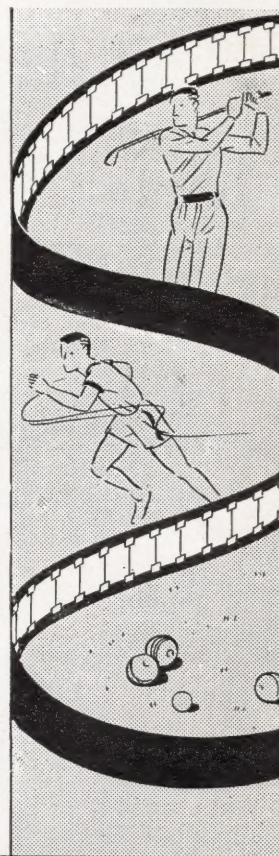
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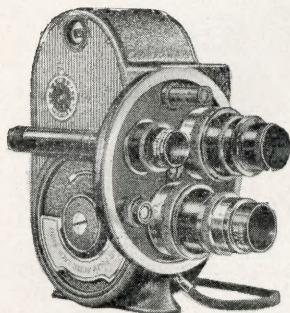
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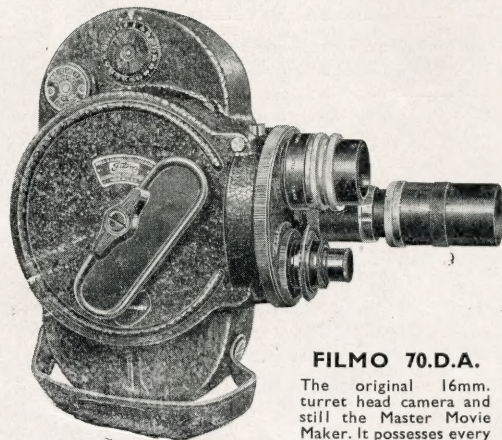
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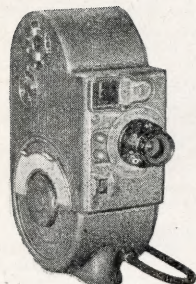
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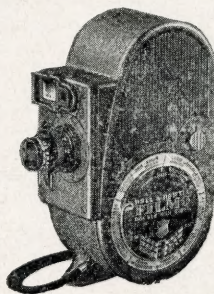
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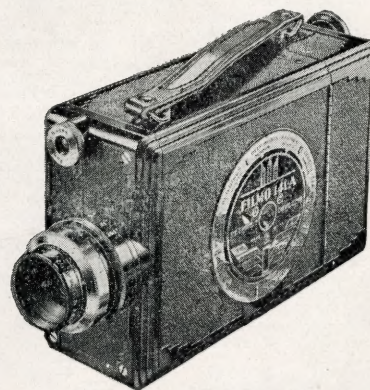


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Gordon S. Malthouse
Editor

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Camera Work in the Amateur Film

FILM criticism is a curious trade. There can never be uniformity of view. Readers' letters on the "Ten Best" in this issue, for example, show a wide divergence of opinion. One reader will condemn a film for the very qualities that commend it to another. The film, by its very nature, defeats criticism. It is a universal medium; it must speak in terms that both the sophisticated and the uneducated can appreciate. Such an amalgam of talents is too volatile for easy examination under the microscope. Yet there is generally no difficulty about dissecting its structure, of appraising its technical merits; it is the value that is put upon the several aspects of technique that is subject to such widely differing interpretations.

A dissimilarity of viewpoint, as striking as that revealed in our correspondents' letters, is evident also in the awards made at the recent Seventh Scottish Amateur Film Festival. Films which have won awards in *Amateur Cine World* competitions are passed over; films which we have rejected and have not even requested to see a second time for the final judging are awarded prizes. Yet the criticisms of the Festival adjudicators are in almost all cases substantially the same as those of the A.C.W. judges. The difference lies in their application.

Where Critics Parted Company

It may help at least to clarify our own viewpoint if we examine some of the cases in which the critics have parted company. The film that won the novices' cup at the Festival is described in the judges' report as "far from perfect in that it was badly balanced and unsatisfactory in construction but the photography was good and to take such an animated subject (fox hunting) as a theme was a good choice." We saw this film a year or so ago and concur in the view expressed. It was because the construction was faulty that we passed it over. It would appear, then, that the Festival judges esteem photography and theme above balance and construction.

We can appreciate, although we do not subscribe to, their point of view; neither theirs nor ours can be said to be right or wrong, for we are dealing not with fact but with opinion. In a film in which there are faults—as there are in every film—faults which each critic recognises as such, one must necessarily decide which of them are of basic significance in relation to the whole film.

For us, good photography cannot condone for patently inadequate construction, just as fine writing would not reconcile us to a badly constructed novel. Our preference in this matter is not dictated by any consideration of the comparative ease with which good photography can be secured. For whatever else about cinematography may be difficult, the camerawork at least should present no problems. It is chiefly a matter of getting the right viewpoint and the right exposure; the

one calls for a certain amount of artistic skill, the other the ability to interpret the meter reading.

No, we do not belittle it because it is easy to achieve. We do not belittle it at all. Good photography is vitally important because it assists clarity of expression.

That, for us, is the chief essential of a film. And, to our way of thinking, clarity of expression is dependent on construction and balance, while photographic quality merely contributes to it. One is the principle, the other the factor.

Importance of Theme

In another film, however, which was awarded a cup, faults in photography were discounted. "The adjudicators considered it was the kind of unusual and worthwhile subject which amateurs should take. There were some faults in the photography but the film went straight for its subject and opened with good street scenes which immediately established where the game took place, leading up to the vigorous movement of the game. The photography was somewhat faulty and too little attention was paid to the players, of whom there were too few close-ups."

The film "went straight for its subject"; good construction, connoting clarity of expression, is therefore implied. No difference of opinion here. It seems, therefore, that in making the awards the adjudicators were largely concerned with subject. "The theme was a good choice" . . . "It was the kind of unusual and worthwhile subject which amateurs should take."

If we feel inclined to regard these expressions of opinion on what it is good and (by inference) what it is not good for amateurs to take as being a little patronising, let us reflect that the fault may after all lie in ourselves. A good theme is half the battle. We have often said so in these pages. The average picturegoer is far more interested in the story than in anything else about a film. Film criticisms in the popular press are more often concerned with the story than with any other feature.

The amateur who submits a film for public exhibition (a selection of the prize-winning pictures in the Scottish Film Festivals is, of course, shown to the public every year) must expect that considerable attention will be paid to theme. But, he may well ask, what has a theme to be like in order that it may be considered as good? And is there any distinction between a 'good' theme and a theme that is 'good for amateurs'? Subjects held to be good for amateurs so often turn out to be dull things that the professional has the sense to avoid—useful things such as drains and sanitation, subjects which the free-lance author would never dream of writing about but which are regarded as highly satisfactory and improving for amateur cinematographers.

But this aspect of amateur films we must leave until next month for discussion.

THE EDITOR.



There is no limit to the artistic patterns that may be wrought from that remarkably plastic material: the film strip; though the seeds are set in their preparation, it is in the actual assembly of the film strips that the flower of the stylist blossoms.

Style in

IT is difficult to set down any clear-cut advice regarding style in documentary films, for this style is an indefinable thing—far more so than in film plays where the director's stylish "touches" nearly always relate to acted effects such as Lubitsch's door scenes or D. W. Griffiths' heroines smiling bravely through their tears: but the several suggestions and examples given below, which have been tried out and have proved satisfactory, will serve to illustrate some of the general principles and to set up trains of thought that should prove fruitful in new ideas.

Referring broadly to all documentary films except those that are severely technical, I have found the following main rules infallibly satisfactory:

Eight Principal Rules

1. Break up the action into distinct incidents (each forming a film "sequence" of about half a minute to two minutes in length) and vary these as much as possible; this makes for maximum sustained interest and reduces the danger of dull patches.
2. Arrange at least one "unusual" sequence in the early part of the film, calculated to "carry" any rather dull, though probably essential, descriptive passage.
3. Arrange a climax of some sort in the penultimate sequence.
4. Insert a definite comical or sentimental note in the final sequence.
5. If possible, connect the first and the last sequences by means of some basic repetition. This "binds" the film, and establishes a comfortable and satisfactory "full-circle" feeling in the minds of the audience.
6. So word the titles that in addition to their fundamental purpose of description they have sufficient literary form to make them stand on their own as pieces of writing as opposed to mere labels. This does *not* mean indulging in exuberant verbosity.
7. Choose a good lead title and give to the film all the photographic perfection at your command. This includes good angles, appropriate fades, careful composition and filtering, any necessary trick effects, and also whatever tinting may be desirable.
8. Finally impart style and polish to the film by carefully-calculated editing which will ensure the best possible arrangement of the available shots. Full advantage should be taken

Notice how effectively the trees frame the scene — and imagine how flat and dull it would be without them.

of the more subtle effects of suggestion, contrast, pictorial analogy, etc., as well as the routine business of careful matching and cutting of shots to achieve the desired tempo in each sequence.

It will be appreciated that style in a cinematographer's work springs from his individual methods of applying the rules set out above; and this fact is duly referred to in the following elaborations on these rules, with examples; simple examples based on simple film themes have been chosen because these are the cases where it is most difficult to get variety and a reasonable climax.

1. Suppose an eight-minute documentary is required to show a family "at home" one afternoon. One could set the entire action of the film at tea in the garden; or every character could be separately introduced in a different setting, all to meet at tea later. This broadly illustrates the wide choice as to the number of incidents or episodes into which the film action may be split: thus the first method has only one sequence, the second has six, assuming five people in the family.

Introductory Episodes

For variety, the five introductory episodes will be as different as possible in action and in setting: thus Mother prepares tea; Father hurries home from work; Aunt Mabel sleeps; young John idles on his way home from School; and Audrey is busy making a miniature garden. The individual cinematographer's style will be manifest by his handling of these sequences, and his balancing of them one against the next.

2. "Unusual" sequences are easily contrived and almost always successful. In a film on gardening, one would naturally include a sequence showing flowers



Documentary

Films By— H. A. V. Bulleid, M.A.

growing rapidly, by the one-frame-per-hour method. In the present example we could give Aunt Mabel a comic dream wherein we see her sneak up to the laden tea-table to pinch a cake ; but even as she touches it, it vanishes . . . and so on till the whole table goes, then, as she wearily sits down, the very chair disappears so she collapses. She wakes with a start and we find she has, in fact, fallen out of her chair.

Working Up to the Climax

3. In the present example, the actual tea forms the climax. Climax means culmination (which is what this tea is) and should not be confused with a Hollywood-type hokum climax of the earthquake—car-chase—hurricane category. Even in a scenic film of slow, pictorial theme, a climax can be contrived—for example, a glorious sunset. It is very important to work up to the climax in the preceding sequences ; and here again the stylist will make a special point of imbuing every sequence with some hint of the climax to come.

4. The climax should always be followed by one other short sequence. This serves to emphasize the climax, in retrospect ; kept short, there is no “anti-climax” danger ; also, it prevents the abrupt and disconcerting appearance of “The End,” while the audience is keyed-up ; and it can be used to “round off” the film, which is generally impossible in the climax sequence without lessening the effect.

This rule, which applies equally to film-plays, is best appreciated by considering a famous exception such as Harold Lloyd’s “Safety Last.” The final hectic moment came when he reached the top of the skyscraper safely, only to be knocked silly by the anemometer ; his foot catches in a rope, he falls over, swings out and back, regains the ledge and ends up in Mildred Davis’s arms . . . they walk away (through a pool of tar on the roof, so their shoes come off, but neither notices) . . . The End.

Concluding Sequences

However, the rule should not normally be broken ; and so, in a scenic film with a sunset climax the final “sequence” might consist of one shot only, a long shot by pale, silvery moonlight of a quiet landscape. Again, in the family-at-tea example, the final sequence might show the Mother back where we first found her—at work—but this time preparing the *supper* . . . Contrast adds to the value of these final sequences ; recall the final shots of a boat silhouetted against the rising sun, peaceful and serene after a night of horror, in the 1926 Italian version of “The Last Days of Pompeii.”

5. This basic repetition is invaluable, and has already been indicated in the example of Mother-back-at-work. The cinematographer who is out to acquire a personal style in his work will seek always to start and end his film on the same fundamental action or image. In this



The suggestion of movement is enhanced when subjects fall into a diagonal line, but the effect is nullified to a certain extent by the high angle.

matter, it should be noted that simplicity can be a powerful asset. I have used the following simple shot combinations to

open and close a film showing “glimpses of a day at home”:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Opening sequence | 1. L.S. The house. |
| | 2. L.S. ditto. |
| | 3. M.S. ditto. |
| Final sequence | 93. as shot 3. |
| | 94. as shot 2. |
| | 95. as shot 1. Slow iris-out. |

This really sounds quite ludicrously elementary, but it is undeniably most effective on the screen. The shots are, of course, carefully chosen, as is described under (7) below. It will also be realised that there is a simple but very positive underlying idea of “going-up-to” in shots 1 to 3, and of “going-away-from” in shots 93 to 95 ; and this serves to introduce the house and, later, to bid it farewell.

The suggested moonlight shot after the sunset in (4) above should be connected, as regards subject, with the opening shots of the film.

- One can start thus
1. C.S. Fade-in. A group of daisies.
 2. M.S. ditto ; PAN to L.S. across meadow.
- ... and end thus . . .
- L.S. view by moonlight across meadow ;
 - PAN to M.S., group of daisies—
 - C.S. the daisies ; the flowers are closed.
 - Fade out.

6. It seems that there are two main schools of thought regarding titles. Some use no titles, going to great lengths to avoid them. Others use them, but apologetically, as though they were an unfortunate affliction. In fact, properly used titles should be an integral part of the film form ; it is exhausting and irritating to an audience to have to sit puzzling over complex sequences which could easily be shortened and clarified by a single

(Continued on next page)

STYLE in DOCUMENTARY FILMS

title. Length and wording should match the speed and nature of the sequence. This is best illustrated by two famous examples, in neither of which is the title absolutely essential, though in each case it strengthened and pointed the idea being expressed :

(a) from Eisenstein's "October." (Fast tempo).

TITLE. And the Government—?
M.S. Kerensky's chair—empty.

(b) from Carmine Gallone's "The Last Days of Pompeii." (Slow tempo).

TITLE. It seemed as though the sun would never dare to rise upon such a night of desolation ; but, at last, the dawn broke like a caress upon the weary refugees—

L.S. A boat on the calm sea ; the rising sun beyond

These examples merit careful consideration. Note particularly that the Pompeii title gets over the necessity of showing anything of the ruined city, to do which would savour of anticlimax.

In the case of documentary film introductory titles, a lot can be gained by getting away from hackneyed wording : thus, to precede the opening three shots of the house quoted under (5) above, the following title was used :

51° 22' N,
0° 8' W ;
—and under a
windswept sky—

which is a new way of giving the location, and is a little intriguing, and reads well, and satisfactorily introduces the L.S. of the house.

7. One cannot too strongly emphasize the fact that hack main titles should be avoided at all costs. "Holiday, 1939" and so forth, are dull labels. "Sea Breezes" is a title. Sometimes a quotation, perhaps adapted to suit, looks well under a vague main title : thus for a film that could have been labelled "A day at home" I employed :

"INTERLUDE . . ."
Here is a Dome of
Many-Coloured Glasses.

It goes without saying that all the photographic skill at one's command should be lavished on each film : this often entails waiting patiently for Nature to co-operate ; for example, it was decided in the scenario stage that the shots of the house quoted under (5) above should be taken on one of those bright windy days with low clouds, so that cloud-shadows would pass towards the camera. The resulting shots rewarded a total of four hours' waiting . . .



Not only the show places but the places where people live—the quaint nooks and corners—should be illustrated in a film of your home town.

(Continued from previous page)

Tinting is a little-explored asset of considerable value : the tea-in-garden sequence in the above examples is an ideal sequence for tinting orange (=brilliant sunshine).

8. Before considering, finally, the important last phase, that is, the editing, it is well to note the importance of adding those "deft touches" that will lift the film out of the rut and enable original and stylish editing tricks to be employed. Reverting to the tea-in-garden example, the sequences are . . .

1. Mother prepares tea. 2. Father hurries home. 3. Aunt Mabel sleeps. 4. John idles home. 5. Audrey makes miniature garden. 6. The tea sequence. 7. Mother prepares supper.

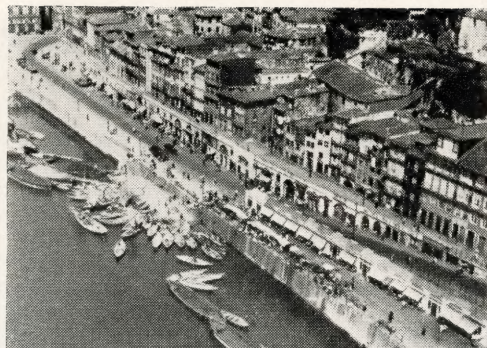
"Original" touches that might usefully be applied to these sequences are such as the following . . .

1. Interrupted by 'phone ; tea-cakes burn.
2. He is hot, and hurries slowly ; a child of three very coolly out-paces him up the hill.
3. Comic trick-photography dream effect.
4. Keeps looking at his watch, and we realize it has stopped ten to five.
5. Start with C.S. of the miniature garden, which will thus appear to be full-sized on the screen ; then Audrey's fingers appear, and pick out a "hefty boulder."
6. Tea is perpetually interrupted by everyone in turn giving bits of tea-cake to the dog.
7. A cake is ingeniously converted into the sweet for supper.

In editing, advantage must be taken of all the known methods of achieving good effect ; and the scenario can be ignored if a good scheme presents itself during the cutting stage, and there is sufficient material to permit its exploitation. Thus, it might be well to have a medley sequence showing flashes of the five people with the time element—three minutes to tea-time—emphasized. After this we could employ a trick editing construction to start off sequence 6 with a wallop, as follows :

- C.S. The clock—two minutes to five.
L.S. Tea all ready in garden, but no one there,
M.S. Mother gives the gong a mighty blow.
C.S. Clock—five o'clock.
L.S. Father, Aunt Mabel, John and Audrey actually starting tea . . . Mother walks up.

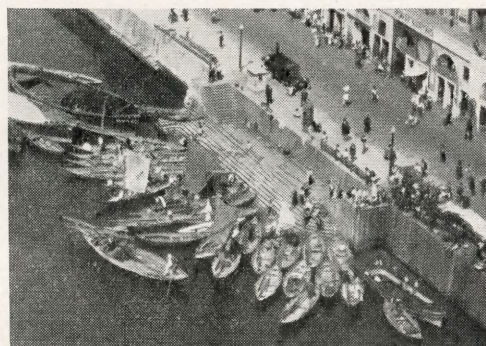
These photographs, taken from a bridge in Porto (Portugal) show the field encompassed by (A) a short focus lens, (B) a "standard" lens, and (C) a long focus lens. All were, of course, taken from the same position.



A



B



C

The EYES of the CAMERA

In order that we may know how and why we must use certain lenses for certain effects, we must know the working principles of them. Next month our contributor will deal with their practical application.

By ALEX STRASSER, F.R.P.S.

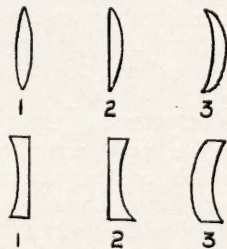
THE most important part of a camera is the lens. It is often called the "eye of the camera," since it has the same function as the human eye, which is : to form an image of what is in front of it and to transmit this image to the back of the camera, where it is registered by the film.

Unlike the single specimens of the human eye, however, which in healthy condition are always functioning in the same way, the eyes of the camera—the lenses—can differ considerably from each other in many important points ; every user of a camera should know the working principles of the lenses in order to understand fully why he has to do this or that when taking his shots, or why he must use a special lens for a special effect. This article will try to explain in as simple a form as possible what is necessary for the film amateur to know.

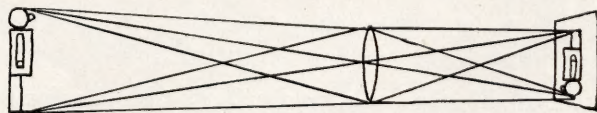
The difference between an ordinary piece of glass and a lens is that the latter must have at least one surface spherically curved either outwards (convex) or inwards (concave), and that it is always made of optical glass.

From our point of view we can divide all lenses into two categories : (a) Those which are thicker at the centre than at the sides are called "positive" or "convergent" lenses ; (b) Those which are thinner at the centre than at the sides are called "negative" or "divergent" lenses.

Photographic lenses are always convergent lenses, since it is by converging the light rays that they are able to form the required image. Negative lenses cannot form images and cannot therefore be used for photographic purposes, except as parts of lens combinations.



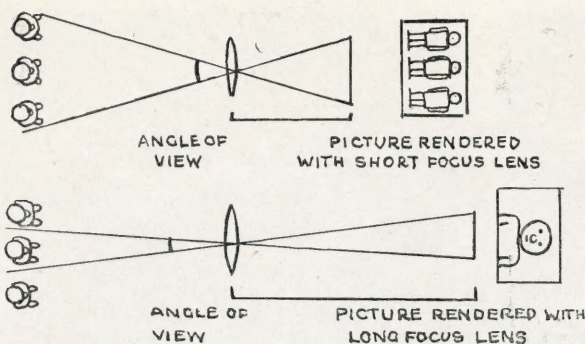
The forming of an image by a lens takes place in the following way. Rays of the sun fall on to the subject and are reflected by it in all directions. Those of the reflected rays which are travelling towards the camera are bound to come into contact with the lens ; in passing through it they are bent by its curved surfaces in such a way that they converge at some distance behind the lens to a point called the "focal point." It is in the plane of the focal points that the film must be placed. Every single point of the figure is thus registered by a corresponding point on the film (the diagram shows only two of these points), the lens reversing the picture so that it appears upside down on the film.



The next thing we have to know is that strongly curved lenses form the image at a nearer distance than slightly curved ones. The distance between the lens and the image is called the "focal distance" or "focal length" and this length is always engraved on the lens mount (viz., 20mm., 1", etc.).

The angle of view of strongly curved lenses is much wider than that of slightly curved ones. The practical implication is that strongly curved lenses—or, as we want to call them from now on : short-focus lenses—give a wide picture area ; the details in the picture appear consequently very small. Long-focus lenses, on the other hand, comprise a smaller picture area with the details rendered correspondingly bigger. The diagram shows the subject as it would appear on the film when photographed with a short-focus and a long-focus lens

(Continued on next page)



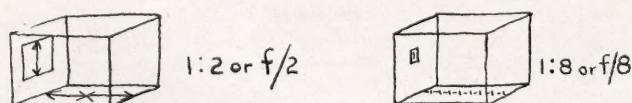
from the same distance. See also the three photographs on the previous page.

Many cine-cameras have only one lens fitted to them which has to be used for every type of work. This lens must therefore have neither too short nor too long a focus, but should be a compromise. It is called a "normal" or "standard" lens and its actual focal length is suited to the size of the film used. In sub-standard film work the lengths of focus of the standard lenses are 20-25mm. for 16mm. cameras, 18-20mm. for 9.5mm. cameras, and 12-13mm. for 8mm. cameras.

Many cameras, however, allow the use of several lenses; in this case, the additional ones will have different lengths of focus. The uses of such additional lenses will be dealt with in the next article.

The focal length is one property by which a lens is distinguished: its aperture is the other. The full aperture of a lens is engraved on the mount like this: $f/3.5$. This means that the diameter of the lens is contained three and half times in its length of focus. Very powerful lenses have an aperture of $f/2$ or even $f/1.4$. We will understand this better if we regard the lens as an ordinary window of an ordinary room.

If the window is very big, its diameter may be half of the length of the room from window to back wall. The relation would then be 1:2 (or expressed photographically: $f/2$), and we can visualise that the room in this case is very brightly lit. But if the window is



very small, like the bull's eye of a ship's cabin, its diameter might only be the 8th part of the length of the cabin and the relation would be 1:8. In consequence, the cabin would only be dimly lit.

Exactly the same is the case with the lens which lets the light into the camera. And we now understand that the smaller the number indicating the aperture (called the *f* number), the bigger the aperture, and vice versa.

For various reasons, discussed later on, we cannot always use the full aperture of a lens, but may often need a smaller aperture. We can achieve this by means of the "diaphragm" which is part of every lens and consists of a number of small metal blades which move concentrically and can reduce the effective aperture of the lens to the size of a pin-hole.

The diaphragm is operated by a lever or ring which moves along a scale on which various apertures or "lens stops" are marked by their *f* numbers. Reducing

The Eyes of the Camera

(Continued from previous page)

the aperture is called "stopping down," increasing it, "opening up." The lens stops usually marked are: 1.4, 2, 2.8, 4, 5.6, 8, 11, 16, 22. These stops were chosen because each of them lets approximately half the amount of light through as the next bigger one, which is a very convenient arrangement. But please do not confuse the actual stops with their *f* numbers; always remember the bigger the stop the smaller the *f* number, and the bigger the *f* number the smaller the stop. The result is that if you wish less light to fall on your film, you choose a smaller stop, indicated by a bigger *f* number.

The speed of a lens is always judged by its full aperture. Fast or powerful lenses have a full aperture of $f/1.4$ — $f/2$, lenses of normal speed of $f/3.2$ — $f/4.5$, and slow lenses, $f/5.6$ and smaller apertures. Their uses will be discussed in later chapters.

Defective Images

So far we have only spoken of what the lens is able to do and not of what it cannot do. The fact that a convergent lens is able to form an image does not necessarily imply that this image must be a perfect one. On the contrary: single lenses often produce rather defective images; they are either distorted or only partly sharp or give no proper definition.

The scientific names of the most common causes of such defects are: curvature of field, spherical aberration, astigmatism, coma, distortion and chromatic aberration, and they result mainly from the rather involved manner in which the various rays of light are refracted by the lenses. All camera lenses of good quality have, therefore, to be corrected by the makers, and this is done not by using a single lens, but a lens combination containing from 3 to 8 single glasses, each possessing different degrees of refraction, thus cancelling out the faults or compensating for the defects of the others.

These combinations do away with astigmatism (hence their name, "anastigmat" or "double anastigmat"), and eliminate or reduce to a great extent the other defects. The reader will now understand why good lenses cannot be cheap and why it is worth while to spend money on a good lens. Cheap lenses are inevitably of inferior quality and the photographic results disappointing.

Sharpness of Image

We now come to another "deficiency" of lenses which, contrary to the defects just mentioned, cannot be cured in a general way, but has to be attended to individually by the user of the camera. It concerns the sharpness of the image. A lens cannot show the whole view in front of it as sharp as the human eye does. It can only render a more or less limited area sharp at a time. In front of this area and, if the lens is focussed on a near distance, behind it, the image appears blurred.

Let us think of an opera glass. If we direct the glass from a back row on to the stage, we have to turn the knob until the actors come into focus. If we now swing the glass to a nearby box, the persons in it will appear quite blurred and we have to re-focus on this new distance.

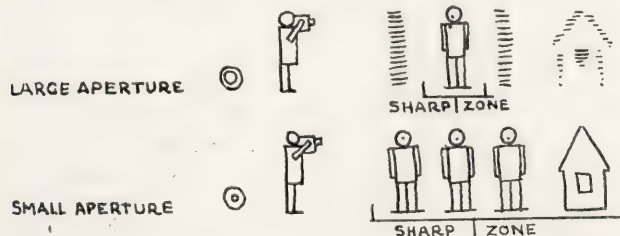
Exactly the same happens with camera lenses. We have to bring into focus the desired subject, which means lengthening or shortening the distance between lens and camera back, thus altering the focus. This is done by moving a lever or turning a knob or the lens itself along a focussing scale (similar to the diaphragm scale) on which the various distances are marked. All lenses except the "fixed focus" have such focussing devices.

Since the sub-standard cine-camera has no ground-glass on which the correct focus can be checked, we have either to estimate the distance or, better, to measure it with the help of an optical distance meter. The distance on which we focus is called the focussing plane.

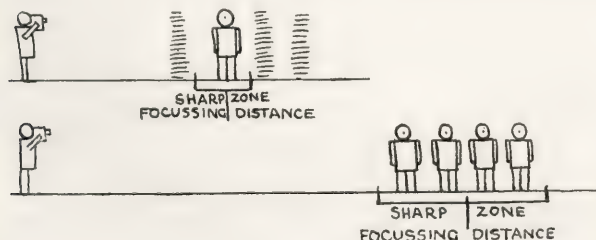
Depth of Focus

Suppose now we focus on a given object not too near to the camera and scrutinise the picture afterwards on the screen. We will then see that not only objects situated at the focussing plane are rendered sharp, but also objects in front and behind this plane. The explanation is that, luckily for us, every lens has a certain inherent "depth of focus" which extends backwards and forwards from the actual focussing plane. This sharp area is called the "depth of focus area."

This area can vary considerably and is sometimes very small and sometimes very big, extending from infinity to almost 3 ft. in front of the camera. Its size depends on various factors, one of them being the aperture employed. *The larger the aperture, the smaller the depth of focus area.* Therefore, if we wish to obtain considerable depth of focus so that foreground and a distant background appear similarly sharp, we have to reduce the aperture of the lens. We now see that the diaphragm has another important function besides cutting down the amount of light entering the camera.

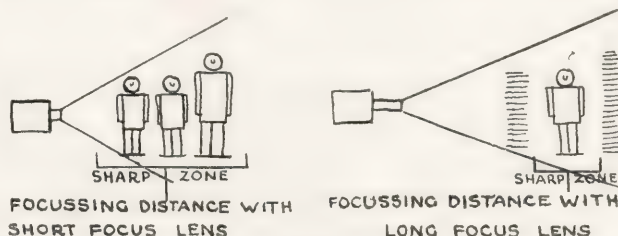


The depth of focus depends also on the distance between the camera and the focussing plane. *The nearer the plane on which we focus, the smaller is the area which is rendered sharp.* Finally, the depth of focus



depends on the focal length of our lens. Here again, *the longer the length of focus, the smaller the depth of focus which the lens renders.*

All this sounds rather confusing, but in practice it is not so difficult and since cine lenses are of relatively short focus, the question of depth of focus does not worry the cine amateur as much as it does the still photographer



who works with large size cameras. It only becomes more involved in the more advanced cine work when lenses of very long focus have to be employed or special effects are wanted.

We now know that the more we reduce the lens aperture by "stopping down" the larger becomes the depth of focus area. This cannot, however, be done indiscriminately since, as we have learned, stopping down involves loss of light. We can only stop down as much as the prevailing light conditions will allow us to do, otherwise our films will become under-exposed. What we may gain on the swings we lose on the roundabouts. The art of good photography depends to a large extent on the ability to find the right compromise between what we want and what we can get; in this case, between a large depth of focus and a well-exposed negative.

Luckily, there exist a number of dodges and short-cuts which facilitate the work of the amateur. We will hear about them in the following articles in which the principles of optics, explained in this article, will be applied to the various practical uses.

Definition

Lenses differ from each other not only in their length of focus and speed, but also as regards their optical type. The optical type of a lens refers mainly to its *definition* and we have to differentiate between the "normal" kind which is supposed to give as sharp an image as possible, and the so-called "soft-focus" lenses which, as their name indicates, renders the contours *soft* with the result that the picture shows a slight and pleasant general diffusion. We also will hear more about these lenses later on.

So that the reader can check whether he has grasped the problems dealt with so far, a few test questions are given here. The answers will appear in our next issue.

1. Why is a "negative lens" unable to form a picture?
2. Why has a short-focus lens a wider angle of view than a long-focus lens?
3. How much more light passes through the lens stop $f/2.8$, than through the stops $f/4$, $f/5.6$ and $f/8$?
4. Is correct focussing more essential on a nearby or a distant object?
5. Does the full aperture of a lens give more or less depth of focus than a smaller lens stop?

Some Exposure Problems

THE knowledgeable amateur may question whether yet another exposure calculator should be inflicted on a long-suffering cinematographic community. The device shown here has a double claim to publicity: it is designed specifically for cinematography rather than for general photography and also it combines the accuracy of detailed tables with rapid operation.

It is probable that, next to the photo-electric meter, the combination of "light-tables" with a calculator gives the highest percentage of correct exposures. Unfortunately the best light-tables do not follow an ordinary "slide-rule" law and, in consequence, up to the present the strength of light according to time of day and month of the year has always been represented in columns of figures. This makes for accuracy but not for speed of operation.

A Notable Discovery

By working on a set of tables which has received the blessing of generations of photographers it was ultimately discovered that the relation between exposure, hour of the day and time of year could be expressed in the equation

$$\log E = m(h^2 + a) - k$$

where E is the exposure under specified conditions, m is a factor dependent on the season of the year, h is the number of hours before or after noon (G.M.T.) and a and k are constants. The equation was evaluated for latitude 55 degrees North and embodied in a calculator for the British Isles.

The calculator is quickly assembled. All the parts are mounted on card and cut out. The two slots are cut with a razor blade and the five holes punched of a diameter that just fits a couple of eyelets such as are used for fastening papers together or for reinforcing the lace-holes of shoes. If an eyeletting machine cannot be borrowed, bifurcated rivets, as used by saddlers, can be utilised instead. It is important to get the holes accurately centred, as the registration depends on these. A shoe-repairer can be very helpful in this matter—but do not let him squash the eyelets so tightly that the discs cannot be turned.

and ANSWERS

I: AN IMPROVED EXPOSURE CALCULATOR.

Exposure for scenic shots—modifications for distant views—effect of tilting the camera—haze—against the light—sunshine or shadow?... these are some of the aspects of exposure that will be discussed in a later article. Meanwhile here is a surprisingly accurate calculator that will help you to obtain the maximum benefit from the advice to be given in the next article. Make it up and try it out now. It is very easy to assemble.

By R. H. ALDER

The "time-of-day" disc is eyeletted behind the slots in the rectangular card. The other two discs—the smaller one on top—are pivoted on one eyelet over the right-middle of the rectangle. It will be found that the two larger discs project sufficiently below the bottom edge to allow of thumb operation.

Both of the larger discs should rotate on the eyelets, but the smaller one should stay put so that the line, "Filter factor 2," is horizontal. If it tends to turn with the larger disc it can be cemented to the top of the eyelet with a touch of thick adhesive.

Strengthening the Calculator

The assembled calculator can be considerably strengthened by fastening the four corners, with a wire letter-stapler or with paper-fasteners, to a second rectangle of stout card 5 inches by 3½ inches. The outside dimensions have been selected because they are the same as those of a folded National Registration Card and the calculator can be fastened inside the back cover of the wallet in which the card is usually carried.

On the scale showing time-of-year the months have been divided into three segments of approximately ten days each—June and

December "turn the corners" and show twenty days on one side of the scale and the rest of the month on the other. In use, the time of day is set against the day of the month; this setting causes the index line to travel along the slot which adjoins the other large disc.

The second disc is then turned so that the appropriate weather indication rests on the end of the index line seen through the small slot. Opposite the subject (in the column on the extreme right) can be read the correct stop, at normal running speed, for ordinary pan film with no filter, or for super-pan with a 2x filter, for hypersensitive pan with a 4x filter or Super XX with a 5x filter.

Possibly another combination of film and filter factor may be required. If so, the disc is again set so that the stop already ascertained is brought opposite the mark on the inner disc corresponding with the speed of the film in use. Then the filter-factor points to the stop to be used.

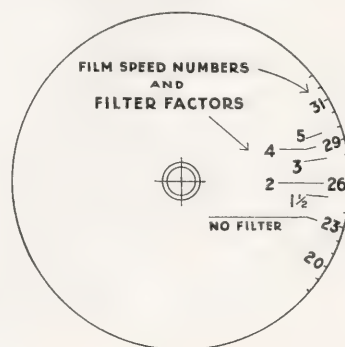
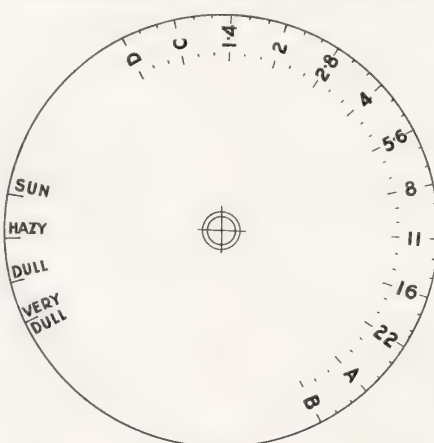
When f Number is Too Small

Occasionally (e.g., for an open beach long shot on a sunny June day) the size of stop may be impossibly small. For this reason the letters A and B are shown on the disc: when the letter indicated by the first setting is brought against the film-speed, the calculator will show the factor of the filter (either neutral-density or colour-correcting) required for a stop of f/16 or f/22. Similarly the letters C and D deal with cases where the light is very poor.

The subject of film speeds is a thorny one. Every film manufacturer has his own basis for estimating speed numbers and therefore every meter and calculator designer has to reduce all the different scales to a single scheme. To avoid misunderstanding it should be explained that the speed numbers in the list given with this calculator do not necessarily agree with all manufacturers' ratings. They do, however, show the speeds of those films relative to this calculator and correspond closely with what may be called a "British Scheiner" scale.

The "subject" scale may provoke even more acid discussion than the question of film speeds. It will be observed that

These discs, to be mounted in the positions indicated on the body of the calculator reproduced on the opposite page, should be cut out and mounted on card.

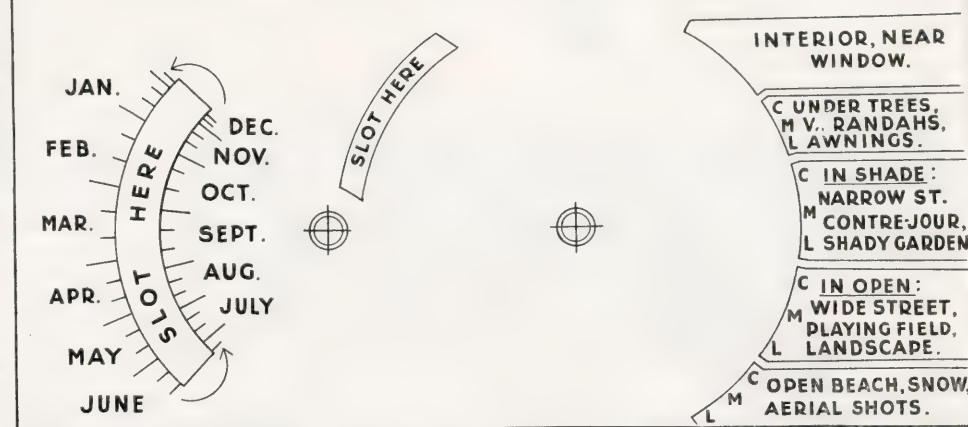


The two slots in the calculator are best cut with a razor blade. If you have any difficulty in fixing on the discs, a shoe-maker can probably help! (See instructions in article).

subjects are grouped under various broad classifications ("In the Shade," "In the Open," etc.), and that on the left of each group are the letters C, M and L, signifying close, medium and long shots respectively. The stop-reading nearest to the letter which describes the type of shot should be taken as the correct stop to use.

Any verbal description (especially a brief one) of a type of scene may be misleading on occasion. It is therefore proposed to give at a later date a more detailed, and illustrated, account of the effect of subject on exposure—an exposition which will apply not only to the use of this calculator but also to the use of other devices for determining exposure.

AMATEUR CINE WORLD QUICK-SET EXPOSURE CALCULATOR



Running Commentary

By "SOUND TRACK"

Hand-Colouring The very mention of hand-colouring in connection with cine film sends many cameramen quite groggy; nevertheless, in certain cases the job is useful as a special effect, and is reasonably easily done. The stock case, taboo "for the duration," is colouring street illuminated signs; the colour is brushed on to each frame as required, and, of course, it may be applied freely over the area of the frame occupied by each sign, because any excess is lost in the black background.

The application is simple; free the film from grease with carbon tetrachloride and apply the stain with a fine paint brush to the emulsion: the stain intensity is chosen to suit the scene: the job is most comfortably done with the film on a glass sheet lit from behind. This effect was used in the opening shot (the lights of Paris) of "The Rat" (British, 1925, directed by Graham Cutts, with Ivor Novello and Mae Marsh).

An extension of the effect is the application of colour to a part of the frame in any ordinary shot: for example, if it is desired to show someone blushing, a close-up can be shot and the film-strip then hand-tinted pink... deepening pink on successive frames! This is a rather hearty gag, and was used in "The Love Expert" (American, 1920, directed by David Kirkland, with Constance Talmadge). It must be remembered, in hand colouring, that a very dark border surrounding the coloured part must be contrived in order to cover up the slight fringing that inevitably occurs when the colour is applied: fortunately the different amounts of fringing in successive frames are "ironed-out" and so do not matter.

Using the Calculator. In the left-hand slot set the time-of-day against the time-of-year. Set the right-hand scale so that "weather" comes against index mark in the centre slot. Against each type of subject may be read the stop to be used for normal running-speed on ordinary pan film with no filter, super-pan with a 2x filter, hypersensitive pan with a 4x filter or Super XX with a 5x filter.

To find the correct exposure with other combinations of film-speed and filter, re-set the right-hand disc so that the stop already ascertained is opposite the speed of the film in use, as marked on the centre disc. The factor of the filter in use then points to the correct aperture.

Weather Scale. "Sun" means that the sun is unobscured (whether or not it is shining on the subject); "Hazy," sun obscured but casting definite shadows; "Dull," no sun-shadow but clouds not too thick; "Very Dull," heavy clouds.

Film Speeds. The speed numbers are Scheiner numbers on a scale suited to the calculator. The following are the speeds of certain films:—

Bauchet	Gevaert	Kodak	Selo
Hyperchromatic 23	Ortho Reversal 24	8mm. Panchro 21	16mm. F.G. Neg. 24
Super Panchro 26	Panchro-Microgran 25	Pan reversible 23	9.5mm. Pan. Rev. 24
Pathe S.O. 23	Super Panchro 27	S.S. Panchro 26	16mm. Pan Rev. 26
S.S. Pan 26		Super XX 30	Hypersensitive 29

CUT OUT THE ABOVE AND PASTE IT ON THE BACK OF YOUR CALCULATOR

Definitely, this effect deserves exploitation. I have used it in the case of a super-imposed thought flashback of a night-scene; so that the main part of the frame was uncoloured but the super-imposed part was tinted blue, which strengthened the shot by emphasising the link between thought and previously-seen reality.

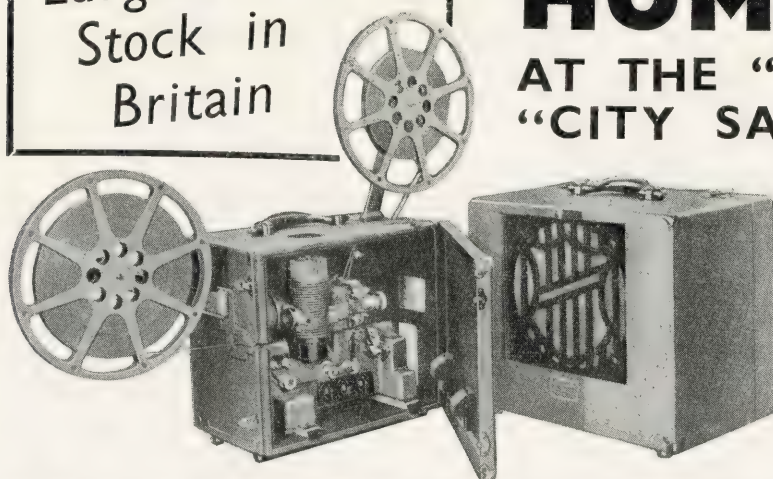
Spooling At a time when everyone is asked to make economies, one may look askance at those several super-reels which lie in the library and only get used about once a year. One keeps buying extra super-reels, yet many are always idle... the point being that the film on seldom-used reels can easily be stored wound "on itself" so long as a tin is available. It may be added that all 35mm. films, normally in 1,000-ft. reels (=400 ft. of 9.5mm.), are stored in this way, being wound after use on to a split

spool, whence they go direct into their cans.

Rather than go to the trouble of making a split spool for sub-standard films, however, it is convenient to use a 30- or 50- or 100-ft. spool, of which most cinematographers acquire an embarrassing surplus, and allow the film to wind up on to and over this. To ensure the film winding up smoothly and safely, a flat card, cut to a diameter equal to that of the super-reels normally used, is put on to the rewind-spindle beside the small spool; and the growing coil of film is guided against this card.

As regards humidifying pads, it is now generally and authoritatively agreed that these should not be used in our climate, assuming the film is kept in a room of normal temperature; there is always the danger of too much humidity, and the pads and solutions are, in short, redundant.

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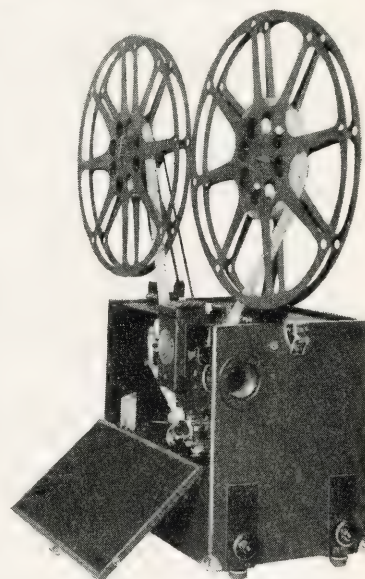
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Technical Aspects of The PUBLIC FILM SHOW

IN placing your audience two requirements have to be considered, inasmuch as you have to arrange for the most efficient reproduction of picture as well as sound. As far as the picture is concerned, the normal standards of silent projection can be adhered to. That is to say, if you have a silver or a bead screen, keep your block of seats relatively long and narrow. If you have a white screen (and provided there is enough light, a good white screen is infinitely preferable to any other), the audience arrangement can be shorter and wider.

Choosing the Screen

Get the best screen that you can afford. By this we do not mean that you should choose one with the most chromium plating or other gadgets. These are relatively unimportant. What does matter is that you should get the best possible surface, designed to be used in conjunction with the particular form of illuminant which is employed in sub-standard projectors. In this connection may we again direct your attention to the interesting letter from Mr. E. G. Turner which appeared in our May issue. Mr. Turner has been experimenting with screens for 43 years. This rather nullifies the opinions held by some amateurs that 'anything will do.'

If you eventually decide to use a screen of the silver or bead type, remember that its outstanding character will be its directional reflection properties. As long as the surface remains *dead flat* when erected, an observer at any point will see an evenly illuminated picture, but should there be any irregularity its presence will shriek at you, because the degree of reflection at that point will change abruptly.

Avoiding Blemishes on Screen

We mention this particularly for the benefit of those users who anticipate carrying a screen from place to place. If you do so, have your screen in a stiff or semi-stiff container when not in use, and *do not lash it round* with ropes or string, otherwise your next projection show will be ruined by a series of light and dark patches appearing wherever the rope has pinched the rolled-up screen. The effect will persist throughout the whole show and can only be eliminated by prolonged hanging. It is generally unsafe to attempt to iron out the irregularities, particularly with a bead screen, as the surface may become sticky and lose some of its dressing.

A white screen will not show this defect, and tends to reduce the effect of graininess and to preserve the full range of tones in the picture, but is generally not so suitable for large shows, as the amount of light available is not always sufficient for really big pictures.

The sound side of your projection show makes it desirable that you should not have the front rows of your audience too far forward. If we can return to our photoflood analogy, the reason becomes clear. If a subject of given size is placed ten feet from a light source and the background is eighty feet away, the subject

Last month's article dealt with the problems of acoustics, described how sound is distorted under certain conditions, and suggested methods for overcoming the difficulty.

will be sixty-four times brighter than the background. If the lamp and background remain as they are and the subject is moved to a distance of 20 feet from the lamp, then it is only sixteen times brighter than the background. In other words, the contrast is greatly reduced.

Sound is sufficiently similar in its behaviour for this argument to apply, and it will thus be seen that by placing your front row an adequate distance back from the speaker which is beside the screen, it is easier to arrive at a sound level which is acceptable to the largest possible number of people in the room.

The speakers used with sub-standard sound projectors are, for the most part, fairly directional in character. That is to say, they tend to throw out a broad beam rather than a widely distributed flood

(Continued on next page)



When taking against-the-light shots, make sure that you have a deep lens hood in the camera to prevent stray beams of light from striking the lens.

The Public Film Show

of sound. For this reason it is not desirable for you to make your audience distribution too wide.

Audience distribution may be affected by the need to run a cable from the projection unit to the speaker unit. The common practice in designing sub-standard projectors is to limit the amplification system to the projection unit, the cable merely conveying the amplified power to the speaker unit. There is therefore little possibility of any interference which may be picked up in the cable being sufficient to manifest itself to the detriment of the sound reproduction.

Nevertheless, the length of cable used should be kept as short as possible, and

(Continued from previous page)

very flat rubber ribbon with the leads spaced well apart and running parallel.

Cables are of various forms, as far as the number of wires, the method of carrying and the method of connecting are concerned. In earlier patterns, which were provided with different plugs or connectors at each end of the cable, it was possible to experience the inconvenience of carefully laying a cable under carpets or slinging it overhead, and then discovering that it was the wrong way round, and one had to start all over again after dismantling the first set-up. In theory, one should first connect up the two ends

cable is anchored to the core of the drum, the connector protruding through the side of the drum. The outer end is quite free and can be pulled out and wound up very rapidly. The connections are, of course, made after the cable has been pulled out to the correct length. A further refinement is to fit a folding handle on to the side of the drum. It may be found possible to fit the drum inside one of the existing carrying cases. If it is fitted inside the loud-speaker case, it will probably be necessary to provide some means of locking it solid so that it shall not set up chatter when the speaker is in operation.

Take Projection Stand With You

Although there are a number of so-called 'portable' sub-standard outfits on the market, none of them are truly portable in the sense that the user could travel with them in any public conveyance with ease. The use of a sub-standard sound projector connotes also the use of a car or cart. Consequently there is no great difficulty about carrying as well a really substantial projection stand, preferably one with a metal frame.

If the projector itself is supported on a properly clamped base, as suggested earlier, it may be possible to use a lower shelf in addition, to carry a gramophone turntable which can produce sound through the medium of the projector amplifier network. Many sound projectors permit of this being done.

If you are doing public projection work, particularly for entertainment, a turntable will prove to be a most important asset, because it will enable you to keep a grip on your audience if you play records while film changing is taking place. It may also enable you to include silent films in your programme. Every reader who has attended the showing of the 'Ten Best' has had ample demonstration of how much can be done by the use of non-synchronised music and effects accompanying a film.

Non-Sync. Sound

The expert advice of Miss Brittain, of the Central Record Information Bureau, who composed these sound accompaniments (we really feel that 'composed' is *le mot juste*), is available to anyone who wishes to fit accompaniments to films. You need not be perturbed about the speed at which silent films run, because, almost without exception, sub-standard sound-film projectors run at 16 frames per second as well as 24 frames per second.

If you are going to do this kind of work it is an advantage to have an assistant, so that you can share the tasks of film projection and sound manipulation, but experience has shown that with properly arranged equipment, properly cued records, and adequate rehearsal, one man can do both jobs perfectly well provided there are no rapid and really complex changes to be made. If you are attempting the work single-handed, it will be necessary to have an extension table clamped to your projection stand, on which to lay the cued records, and also to fit a very subdued pilot light to illuminate the 'sound department.'

(Continued on page 131)



should be run by the most direct route consistent with tidiness. In public halls it may often be possible to sling the cable from the roof trusses well over the heads of the audience. This arrangement is to be recommended as it avoids members of the audience tripping over the cable and displacing and possibly damaging some of the equipment. Failing this, a central gangway can be left between the two halves of the audience, with the cable running conspicuously up this, and the ushers instructed to see that the audience approach the two blocks of seats from the sides.

In private residences the problem is simpler, as the cable can either be carried high—and perhaps run round a picture rail—or it can be tucked away beneath carpets. Mats should be laid over it at those points where it would otherwise cover a bare floor surround.

Most of the cables are sheathed in tough rubber, and will stand much mechanical wear. The best type, from the point of view of convenience of laying, is in the form of

Careful selection of camera angle has produced a rhythmic pattern, which would be still further enhanced were the camera to follow the man along the path.

and test before finally running the cable, but circumstances often defeat good intentions.

In some equipments the problem is avoided by connecting one end of the cable permanently to the speaker. In at least one other outfit the problem is solved by means of a cleverly design multi-plug and socket system which enables the cable to be used either way round.

Those projectionists who still possess cables of the earlier type can save themselves trouble by painting the connectors in bright colours. For example, the connector at one end of the cable should be ringed in bright red, and the corresponding connector on either the speaker or projection unit should be ringed in the same colour. The pair at the other end of the cable can be blue.

Yet another useful system is to carry the cable on a drum. The inner end of the



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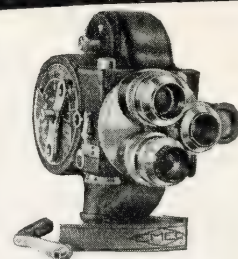
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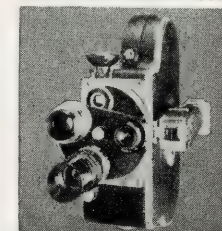
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THIS month brings us one of the finest and most unusual pictures to come out of America for a long time. It is rare to see a picture almost entirely concerned with the open air, still rarer to see one with a tragic ending. Lewis Milestone has combined both these qualities in "Of Mice and Men."

This picture opens with a considerable sequence before we reach the titles. This in itself is unusual. The sequence, which depicts a man hunt, leads up to a very clever set of titles. The last shot of the man hunt is of two fugitives boarding a freight train. There is a mid-shot (back-projected) of a truck with large sliding doors. One man pulls the door shut, and on it is written the first title—a piece of verse which gives the film its name.

Across this door move shadows of telegraph poles as the train moves along, and one of these shadows very cleverly conceals a wipe to the first title-card. This title-card is a photographic copy of the preceding scene, so for the moment no change is apparent. But the transition to a card from a studio shot

Mice, Men and Marionettes

In these notes on recent releases

B. G. D. SALT

discusses "Of Mice and Men," "Pinocchio," "Typhoon," "Sons of the Sea" and "We Are Not Alone."

and are overflowing with hope. The camera quickly drops to a low angle, and looks up to them. It is now no longer we, the audience, who condescend to be interested, but they, the actors, who dominate the scene and, they think, their own future.

There is an extremely effective sequence in which the ancient dog of an old man is taken out to be shot. Two men are playing cards, but the scene is charged with tension, and they are waiting for the sound of the shot. They pay little attention to their

are so well done that they become unnoticeable. The film still lacks something in the art of story-telling—we are not told, for example, how Gepetto gets into the belly of the whale—but the character-drawing is more than amazing. It is most disconcerting to remember, in the midst of shedding a sentimental tear, that one is only seeing drawings!

Since the production of "Snow White," Disney has built two more multiplane camera cranes, now making a total of three. He also has six camera cranes in the "test camera department." When the key-drawings for any scene have been done—that is, pencil drawings for every movement of every figure in the scene—these are sent to the test camera department, where they are photographed in sequence frame by frame. The resulting shots are then sent back to the animators, who are thereby enabled to check their work. These test shots are then edited, just like an ordinary straight film is edited.

Complete Tests

When this has been done, and all waste material has been eliminated, the finished drawings are made on celluloid and photographed, generally on one of the multiplane cranes. This process of shooting the entire film in test first may seem a terrible waste, but clearly it may save many retakes by showing up drawing errors straight away, and also the editing of this test material ensures that only exactly the right number of finished drawings need be made.

In "Pinocchio," models of the various characters were also used by the artists to help them in making their drawings. Plaster casts, painted the right colours, were used, as well as a wooden puppet of Pinocchio which had movable limbs. Probably few people realise the enormous organisation that goes into the production of a Disney feature production. There are not only artists and camera technicians, but story-writers, directors, composers and instrumentalists, electrical engineers, sound engineers, and even paint laboratory technicians and chemists!

Disney has a band of artists who specialise in air-brush work. This accounts for some of the amazingly successful air-brush work in all his films. Generally speaking, it is exceedingly difficult to use the air-brush on animated figures. Air-brushed colour consists of minute dots of paint which have been

(Continued on next page)

Note the air-brushed water in this still from Walt Disney's "Pinocchio." Disney employs a band of artists who specialise in air-brush work. The paint is blown through a gun, so that it is extremely difficult to ensure accurate registration when some hundreds of separate drawings are so treated.



enables all words except "Of Mice and Men" to be faded out. The camera tracks up to these till they fill the screen, and then the remainder of the titles follow normally.

The wipe is so well concealed behind the shadow of the telegraph pole that it would be impossible to detect were it not for a slight change of quality and for the fact that the title card is very slightly out of register with the studio scene.

Lewis Milestone appears to be inordinately fond of truck shots. We remember frequent and extremely effective use of them across no-man's-land in "All Quiet on the Western Front." In "Of Mice and Men" almost half the footage must be composed of truck shots, but almost every one has dramatic value.

We quote just one example. Three men, labourers on a ranch, are discussing the possibility of risking all their savings and buying some land of their own. The camera looks down on them from above, taking a kindly interest in their discussion. Suddenly the three come to the decision to risk all and buy the land. They are elated and excited,

game, and one deals out the cards slowly and absently. The shot rings out. Instantly the tension is relaxed, and the card-dealing promptly becomes rapid, almost feverish.

These are points in direction. Without in any way belittling the other technicians, it is true to say this is the director's picture. Milestone appears to have dominated every stage of its production (he was producer as well as director), and has used every means, technical and otherwise, to strengthen his effects.

The Best Cartoon Yet

"Pinocchio" is Walt Disney's second feature-length cartoon. From all points of view it is true to say that it is the best cartoon, long or short, to date. Disney has progressed a long way since "Snow White." That film was episodic, full of technical brilliance which was out of keeping with the film as a whole, and, with the exception of Grumpy, there was little character-drawing.

"Pinocchio" is still full of technical brilliance and special effects. But Disney has become master of his tools, and the effects

Films to See This Month

blown on through the gun. Obviously on no two successive drawings will the dots be in the same place, and the result is a strong tendency to "boiling," similar to the effect produced by some early Dufaycolor films. This boiling was very noticeable in parts of "Gulliver's Travels," but although he has not entirely eliminated it, Disney has gone far to solving the problem.

Many of Disney's water effects are produced by clever use of the air-brush, and his most striking effects, used for the sea and for glinting sunlight in under-water scenes, are produced by a means which Disney keeps a very close secret, and at which one can only make guesses.

Slow-Motion Technicolor Shots

Other recent releases include "Typhoon"—a further Dorothy Lamour episode in the South Seas. This time in Technicolor. One sometimes is moved to wonder why all Hollywood jungle homes are invariably fitted with the latest thing in elevators . . .

This film contains some terrific "acts of God," not quite so well done as in "The Hurricane," but well worth a visit if you can put up with the remainder of the film. The typhoon sequences contain some slow-motion Technicolor shots, slow-motion being used to make model shots appear full-size. This has been done before—notably in "Gold is Where You Find It"—but is still sufficient of a novelty in colour to be of interest.

The typhoon is not the only "act of God" we are treated to. We have a first rate forest fire which gets extinguished in due course by the storm. Undoubtedly much of this fire was shot on full-sized sets or real jungle. There is model stuff mixed up with it, and plenty of back-projection, but, on the whole, the staging of the scenes are worthy of a better film.

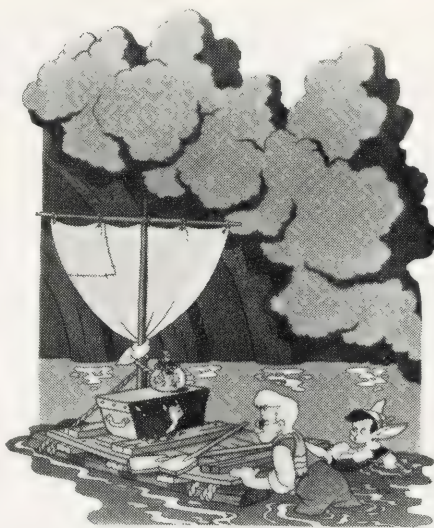
The film opens with a storm on board ship, and for this sequence a full-sized sailing ship was built in the studio. The huge waves, the rocking of the ship, and particularly the flapping of the rigging with men being carried away into the sea, have all been extremely well staged. It is interesting to compare these scenes with a similar sequence in the Elstree-made "Jamaica Inn."

Dufaycolor Film

An English production fairly recently released merits a passing glance. It is a film about Dartmouth Naval College, made just before the war, called "Sons of the Sea." It is an undistinguished picture, but is of slight technical interest in being the first feature film to use the Dufaycolor system. This system is more popular with amateurs than with professionals, and this picture is hardly calculated to add to its popularity.

We have seen Dufaycolor shots of extreme beauty, and we have seen Dufaycolor stills which it would be difficult to improve on by any system, but "Sons of the Sea" seems to have avoided every opportunity of using the system to its best advantage. Readers will note from this film another shortcoming of the system; the impossibility of producing

(Continued from previous page)



Extremes in size: from Jiminy Cricket sitting on the gold-fish bowl to Monstro the Whale. (We are inside the whale!). Detail of a shot from "Pinocchio."

good optical work. There are no mixes, wipes, superimpositions, or any other produce of the optical printer in the whole film. Fades are chemical.

"We Are Not Alone" is an excellent example of how first-rate acting can make the faults of a weak story and poor studio craftsmanship almost unnoticeable. However, since this is intended to be a technical article, we will not enlarge upon the merits of Muni and the rest of a thoroughly competent cast. It is a pity that a little more trouble wasn't taken over the sets. The brick walls are painfully obvious as sheets of cast plaster bricks from the plasterer's shop. The woodwork and remainder of the sets have the same studio artificiality about them—they look fragile, cheap and new with artificial dirt sprayed on.

Bad Set Designing

But perhaps more serious than this is that the designing of the sets of Dr. Newcome's house is definitely bad. We never get any idea of how the house is laid out. There appears to be a most bewildering assortment of doors inside the house, but only a back door via the surgery to the outside! When we go through a door we are never quite certain in what room we shall come out on the other side.

In such a fine film as this it may seem petty to grumble about such trifles, but one of the most important parts of direction lies in establishing the locale so that the audience know their way about. It is here that the director is justified in over-riding the art-director.

The film is full of rather neat continuity devices. Perhaps the most effective is where Flora Robson goes to a cabinet to take a headache tablet, but, owing to an accident, takes a poison. As she reaches for the bottle

we quickly mix to the church clock at midnight which strikes an ominous boom, and then we mix to Muni and Jane Bryan hurrying along a road in the rain. It is necessary to know that it is midnight for the sake of the story, but the director has used at the same time the ominous toll of the church bell to symbolize Robson's death.

In the trial scene there is a sequence of witnesses saying their piece. The dialogue is so arranged that, although each piece is complete in itself, each witness picks up the story with the same words which the last witness left off. Not only does this make the sequence flow with admirable smoothness, but it emphasises the pile of evidence that is accumulating against the innocent doctor.

The picture finishes with a close-up of the doctor's young son, Gerald, in his bath, and on this there is a typically neat bit of lighting. A single lamp has been thrown on the wall in the background, forming a large round light area. Gerald's head, lit normally, almost eclipses this area, but the edges of it form a sort of halo effect round his head. The sentiment is questionable, but the effect as such is neat, and makes a pleasing ending to the picture.

A.C.W. Cine Data

Here is the third of the A.C.W. Cine Tables. The first two, published in our April issue, were tables of points of focus and maximum apertures. The first showed the focussing scale settings required to define any given subject perfectly, giving the point on which to focus, and the second indicated the stop required to cover the subject.

This table is calculated for a circle of confusion of 1/1250" diameter, that is to say, of 1/1000th of the focal length of the lens.

The apertures quoted in these tables are the maximum permissible in order to give satisfactory definition to the subject, but it is quite possible to stop down further if conditions allow.

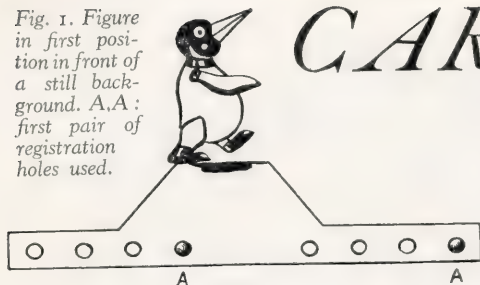
The fourth table in this series includes a maximum aperture table for 1/2" lenses based on a Circle of Confusion of 1/1000". This is adequate for most subjects, but when the most critical definition is required Table 2 should be employed.

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TABLE OF MAXIMUM APERTURES														
(F/ Nos.)														
for 1/5" (20mm.) lens.														
FOCUS POINT IN FEET														
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
15	14.4	13.8	13.2	12.6	12.0	11.4	10.8	10.2	9.6	9.0	8.4	7.8	7.2	6.6
11	10.8	10.2	9.6	9.0	8.4	7.8	7.2	6.6	6.0	5.4	4.8	4.2	3.6	3.0
8	7.2	6.6	6.0	5.4	4.8	4.2	3.6	3.0	2.4	1.8	1.2	0.6	0.0	
6	5.4	4.8	4.2	3.6	3.0	2.4	1.8	1.2	0.6	0.0				
5	4.8	4.2	3.6	3.0	2.4	1.8	1.2	0.6	0.0					
4	4.2	3.6	3.0	2.4	1.8	1.2	0.6	0.0						
3	3.6	3.0	2.4	1.8	1.2	0.6	0.0							
2	3.0	2.4	1.8	1.2	0.6	0.0								
1	2.4	1.8	1.2	0.6	0.0									

Fig. 1. Figure in first position in front of a still background. A.A: first pair of registration holes used.

CARTOONING MADE EASIER



WE will assume that the titler has been adapted for making a cartoon film in accordance with the methods previously described. It will be remembered that these included the provision of registration pegs on the title board, and a supply of white drawing paper with two holes punched in each sheet, to fit over them.

The problem of timing the action of the moving figures has now to be solved. Let us consider first the key positions in the case of a character walking forwards for two paces—a side view, of course. Two different methods of drawing these will be described. The first is comparatively simple and quite effective; the second requires a little more trouble, but the results justify the extra labour involved because smoother action is obtained by it.

First Method

Here the assistance of a friend is necessary. Let him walk forward at the same speed as that required for the cartoon figure, and calculate the time taken for two paces. This is obtained by letting him walk, say, for ten seconds, and counting the number of steps taken in that time. To give a simple example. Suppose he walks 20 steps in the ten seconds, i.e., one double step per second. When the film is projected at the normal speed of 16 frames per second, it is easily seen that 8 frames are occupied for each pace, when one leg is brought up from its hindmost to its foremost position. The complete sequence of two steps occupies 16 frames. This does not necessarily mean that it will require 16 different drawings. As a beginning, I suggest that two frames should be photographed for each drawing, so that only 8 key positions are needed. (One frame per drawing would give much smoother action; three frames gives a jerky effect).

Your friend now poses in eight positions, with his limbs performing the actions of walking two steps. These are roughly sketched in a notebook, and numbered in the correct order. (Figure No. 8, by the way, should have almost reached the position assumed by No. 1). Then, over an illuminated panel, with the sheets of paper registered on pegs, the figures are carefully inked in. From now on, the resemblance of the figures to your friend can be forgotten. He has been used only to obtain natural positions of the limbs. The figures can now become a toy, an animal, or what you will, but care must be taken that the heads are identical, though the positions of the limbs are all different.

Combining Figure and Background

You must now decide whether your background is to be moving or still. In the former

2. TIMING THE ACTION

Concluding instalment of advice on cartoon methods which obviate much of the tedious and meticulous work beyond the amateur's compass.

By G. WAIN

case, the head of the figure remains in the same position all the time with regard to the registration pegs, and the key drawings are simply placed on them in order, while the action is repeated as long as desired. The speed at which the background is moved really depends on the nearness of the "scenery." Distant objects move slowly, foreground objects rapidly, so do not mix the two if you can help it. An average rate is one in which an object on it moves across the screen in about 40 to 50 frames.

New Complications

When the action takes place in front of a still background, new complications arise. The figure now travels bodily across the picture, and thus moves along the supporting piece bearing the two holes. Therefore, when two complete steps have been filmed, the same holes cannot be used for the next two steps, otherwise the figure will start all over again! Fresh holes must be made behind the figure at a distance from the first two holes equal to that moved by the head in the previous two steps, and if more than four steps are required, still more registration holes made. (See Fig. 1).

It is some slight consolation to realise that once smooth action has been obtained with

these key drawings, they can be used over and over again in different parts of the film and in front of different backgrounds. Not always, however—sad to relate—is smooth action obtained by this method of drawing from a living model. To begin with, when the model "freezes" in various walking positions, only a vague idea of the relative speed of the motion at different points is conveyed. One or two objections will doubtless be put forward.

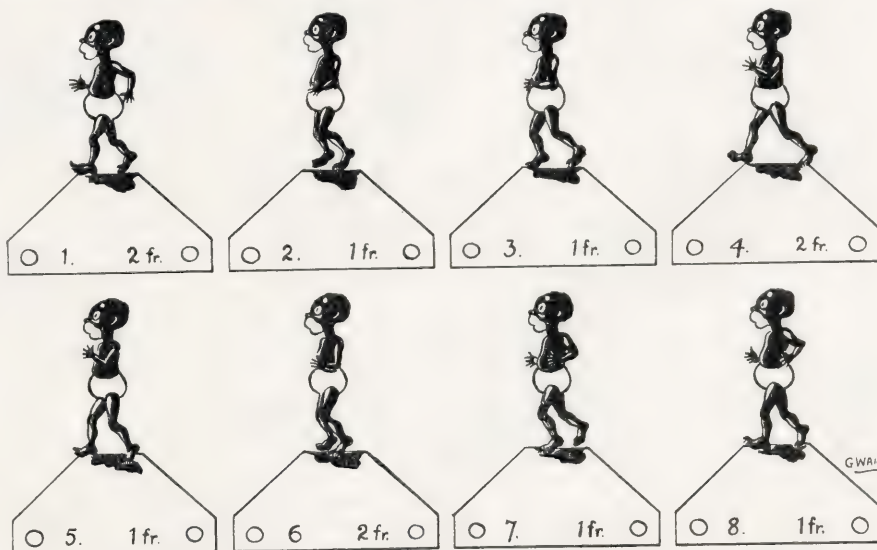
The first is, that the limbs move fastest when they are midway between their two extreme limits. (A similar type of movement is seen in the oscillations of a swinging pendulum). Another criticism is that when a person is walking, his head does not move in a perfectly horizontal line, but performs an undulating, up-and-down motion. Now there is only one way to study this complicated system of movements, and that is by the careful examination of an actual piece of film which has on it the picture of a walking or running person. And the mere examination of it through a lens is not enough. The film must be projected, frame by frame.

Here the advantage of owning a projector with a good still-picture device is a great asset. If the amateur is really interested in the job it might be worth his while to invest in a cheap second-hand projector which will "hold" a picture, without blistering the film, for an appreciable time. For this may be necessary if the following suggestion is to be carried out.

Second Method

Arrange a small pile of drawing papers on yet another set of registration pegs, which are driven into an upright board or other vertical surface. In front of this, fix the projector firmly at a convenient distance.

(Continued on page 132)



Key drawings for a running figure in front of a moving background. The eight sketches occupy eleven frames.

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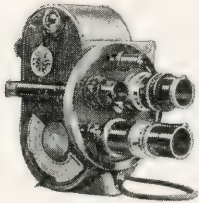
Cine Cameras can be inexpensive to buy and dear to run, and they can be more expensive in the first cost and remarkably cheap in use. The Filmo Turret Head Model illustrated is an example of a de Luxe camera with every professional refinement which is much cheaper to run than many a low-priced model.

8mm. Cine Cameras

BELL & HOWELL

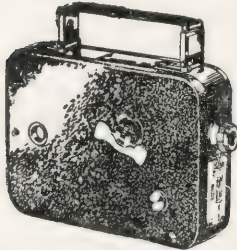
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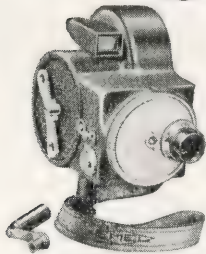
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9.5mm. PROJECTOR

Name. The Hunter 'Nine-Five.'
Makers or Agents. Messrs. R. F. Hunter, Ltd., Celfix House, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

Film Size. 9.5mm.

Construction. The outfit is in three parts, (a) the base and motion head, (b) the separate spool arms, (c) the resistance. The main structure is of die-castings finished in black crackle enamel. The various pulleys, controls and working parts are chromium plated. The base, which measures $6\frac{1}{2}$ " long x $5\frac{1}{4}$ " wide by 1" deep, contains the motor speed control rheostat which is operated by a knob sliding along the right side of it.

The main carcase of the instrument is situated at the left rear of the base, and measures $4\frac{1}{2}$ " wide x $3\frac{1}{4}$ " long and is $5\frac{1}{2}$ " high. The left half of the case contains an electric motor of substantial size, with its driving spindle running parallel to the axis of the projection lens. This directly drives, by means of a belt, the three bladed shutter. The shutter is also a die-casting, the two narrow flicker sectors being of heavier section than the picture sector, to ensure dynamic balance of this component. The spindle of the shutter carries a worm drive, which transmits power to the intermittent movement and to the take-up spool spindle. There are no feed or take-up sprockets.

The spool arms are comprised of a single casting shaped like a very wide 'V,' one leg extending straight to the rear of the machine in a horizontal direction, and the other inclined upwards and forwards at about 45 degrees. Drive from the projector mechanism to the take-up spool spindle is by belt and pulleys.

The separate resistance is contained in a die-cast metal cage and can be set for any voltage from 100 to 250. The twin flex lead from supply to the resistance has a push-through line switch to control the current and start and stop the instrument and the lamp.

Film Transit Mechanism. The film, which is contained on 300 ft. reels of normal pattern, but rather heavier substance than most reels, passes over the top towards the rear of the projector, then down under a guide shaft and then through the gate. Twin claws in tandem pull the film down intermittently through the gate. It then slides round a curved extension of the gate towards the rear of the instrument, passes over a jockey lever and spool brake mechanism somewhat similar in character to the design used on the Pathe Home Movie projector, and enters the take-up spool on its upper side.

Illumination. Illumination is direct, through a condenser, which has a diameter of 11.5mm., and can be slid out instantly for cleaning. The lamp is of the car sidelight type, but with a bulb of only $\frac{1}{16}$ " diameter. It can be replaced for the modest sum of 1s. 9d. It is carried on the end of a cylindrical bakelite moulding which pushes into the back of the projector housing, and



Fig. 4.

can be moved in and out and rotated in order to focus the light to its maximum output.

Frame and Tilt. There is no framing device, but the projector stands on three rubber feet, two at the rear, one in the front. The single foot is on a threaded spindle and can be raised or lowered to tilt the projector.

At 9' the projector will give a picture $40'' \times 30''$ and the illumination is quite adequate with films of medium density.

Projecting 30ft. and 60ft. films. If these are on spools they are threaded as described above. For cassette projection a second spindle half-way down the top arm of the projector comes into operation. The cassette is slid on this, and a container clip holds it in position. The film is now led directly to the gate.

Re-winding. The take-up pulley is provided with a small handle, and the films are rewound by this means.

Price. The instrument, as described, costs £5 12 6 including resistance. A hand-driven all-mains model is also available at £2 17 6.

General Remarks. This is an attempt to provide an inexpensive, simple and reliable projector for 9.5mm. users. It is rugged and sturdy, and projects a bright picture within the limits stated.

Your First Trick Film

(Continued from page 115)

suitably placed in the background. If he jumps down on to, say, a box placed so that the top of the box, the table top and the camera are all in line, then he will appear to jump on to the table. A small stop is necessary to ensure that both the table and distant figure are in focus.

Such shots will be sufficiently convincing if mixed in with true trick shots such as that in Fig. 3. Here the open window was masked out and a normal exposure made. The reverse mask was then put in place and after winding back the film the camera and stage were set up on the black backcloth. A box was placed in front of the cloth, the top being at the same level as the bottom of the window frame. Exposure is made showing the "Tom Thumb" figure climbing on to the box, appearing, of course, to climb up on to the window sill. The size of the figure is determined by the distance from the camera and suitable adjustment for focus must, of course, be made.

By the use of foreground models, which will be described in a later article, and a few shots with simple "properties," such as a "matchbox" knocked up from an old soap box and the "matches" made from broomsticks, which the figure can manipulate, the illusion can be extended indefinitely. Here again, variety and quick cutting will baffle your audience. They will just begin to discover how you have made your trick shot when you puzzle them with another.

Amusing Effect

Another amusing variation on the simple vertical mask is illustrated in Fig. 4. It is probably best introduced in a comic chase showing the fat man disappearing behind a Belisha beacon. In this case the children crawl behind the fence post and disappear. First one peeps out from one side, then the other two from the other side of the post.

The effect is achieved by double exposure with a simple mask cutting on a vertical line down the fence post. The R.H. side is first masked off and the children crawl behind the post. After winding back, with the L.H. side masked off, exposure is made on the background only. By alternate exposure of first one half and then the other, with sufficient actors available, a whole football crowd can be made to come out from behind the shelter of a single post.

This principle has limitless possibilities. It can be used to disgorge a dozen people from a small car. The crowd passes through, in at one door and out at the other, suitable masking permitting the camera to see only those coming out. The other side of the picture is exposed on an empty scene.

Once the principle is understood, there is limitless scope for the ingenious reader to turn this simple trick of double exposure to good account either as a trick film pure and simple or as part and parcel of an otherwise "straight" film.

Readers as Film Critics

I WAS one of an interested and delighted audience at the show of the "Ten Best." I looked forward eagerly to the show and my eagerness was fully justified. The whole programme was enjoyable in every way. I was particularly pleased at what Mr. Andrew Buchanan had to say, and that he still thought there was a place for the silent film, or, at least, a film that was not dominated by the sound track.

I feel that the cinema to-day has lost a lot of its true worth by the addition of sound: sound that is often far too noisy and blatant. The present day fashion for long programmes of three hours or more, with the added concentration necessary to listen attentively and to watch the film at the same time, makes film going, for me at any rate, a somewhat tiring form of entertainment, often attended at the end of it by a bad headache!

However, on Friday night I left Film House neither tired nor with a headache: in fact, very much the reverse! I liked the quiet and restful way in which the films were presented, and the excellent taste displayed in the musical accompaniment to each film.

My only disappointment was that I had to leave before the finish of "The Miracle" to catch a train. This film was, to me, a real achievement—it was a splendid effort, combining good taste and a true feeling for filmic treatment. "Everybody's Birds" also pleased me greatly; the producer was well rewarded for the patience that had been bestowed to get such a delightful film. I must congratulate and thank you and all concerned in giving such an enjoyable evening's entertainment. May these yearly shows have continued success.

Croydon, Surrey. NORMAN WEBSTER.

LOWER STANDARD?

GENERALLY speaking, I came away from Wardour Street with the firm conviction that the standard of the last year's "Ten Best" was considerably below that of the previous year. Few of the entries seemed to grip. I thought "Sunday Morning" an excellent effort. The different subjects were well chosen, and connected, save one.

I never go into raptures when I read of amateur comedy. "What a Night" moved along with the speed of an American travel picture in colour, and all who have seen any of these will know exactly what I mean. When will makers of amateur comedies realise that the pace should be brisk? In this case, the script was very good, likewise the technical side, but the ambling treatment...

After seeing that beautiful effort "Everybody's Birds" on the screen, with its colour, well-timed shots, and a subject which claims the interest of all who love Nature (not forgetting the superb musical accompaniment) my admiration went out to the cameraman for the many hours of patience and careful preparation his film must have cost him.

I thought that the presence of "Refugio" was somewhat ill-timed. As a film, it failed to grip. The car shown looked as if it had just emerged from the Bond Street showroom, instead of giving the impression of having travelled over tortuous roads, although let me add that I hardly expect the producer to

Readers who attended the "Ten Best" presentations at London and Manchester give their views on the films shown.

knock his bus about for art's sake. But that appearance of spick and spanness could easily have been overcome without damage, or a lot of work. Against the film as a medium of propaganda, I as a Britisher, protest strongly. If there's any propaganda to show, then let it be some of our own. I am not void of feeling for the sufferings of my fellow men, women and children, but our attention is now riveted on our home front.



F. J. Mortimer, President of the Royal Photographic Society, presents the Federation Trophy to Ben Carleton, director of "The Miracle." T. S. Lucas, chairman of the Federation, is on Mr. Mortimer's immediate left. Members of Wimbledon, Catford, London and Planet Clubs, who were awarded certificates of merit, are also in the picture.

"Our Daily Bread" was easily the best film of the evening. It would still have been even if it had been shot on black and white. It told a story of something which is of common interest. It told it simply and convincingly, with unobtrusive commentary, which is a rare occurrence. I have every admiration for the makers of "Danse Macabre," but despite the brilliant treatment and the very clever camera work, the "loose" synchronisation of the music ruins what might have been a masterpiece.

I have two major impressions of "The Miracle." I can only agree with all that has been said of the elaborate sets, and the high standard achieved by all the cast. The camera work and the lighting of the studio shots were to me, a thing of joy, but when the camera was out-of-doors, a different tale has to be told. The picture became thin and very wishy-washy, which brings to mind some correspondence which appeared in A.C.W. some time ago. The writer said that: "while it is easy to shoot away on interiors, where the light values are known by experience, it becomes a different matter

when the camera is taken out of doors, where the light takes on divers values... time of day, various densities of cloud, shadows, coloured walls, and so on." These may not be the writer's exact words, but the facts are true enough. My other objection is to the story. I do like realities. I get more than enough of wild imaginative nonsense from American films.

GEORGE W. EVES.

London, W.9.

WASTE OF COLOUR?

WHILE making no pretence to be a film critic, I would like to give you my impressions of the "Ten Best" presentation at Manchester.

"What a Night": An excellent little domestic comedy, very well done and popular with the audience. "Sunday Morning": considering that this film was a first attempt it was very good and showed how a number of miscellaneous shots, having no real connection with one another, could be worked into one central theme and made into a film instead of a collection of odd shots. The photography was very good indeed and it was evident that Mr. W. Fein had taken a great deal of pains to secure particular

shots necessary to ensure continuity.

"Everybody's Birds": my impressions tally with the description in the programme—"A delightful film," and, judging from the applause, that also was the opinion of the audience. Few people have the necessary patience and courage to embark on such a painstaking job and only a real bird lover could have secured such results. Mr. John Chear most certainly deserved the award.

"Refugio": this film I liked least of all, and from what I heard, that opinion was fairly general. Beyond the fact that it was topical, it was not particularly interesting. The shots taken in Spain looked too much like extracts from a rather poor news reel and some of them appeared to suffer from rather bad edge fog. Of course, one realises they were taken under difficulties, but in a competition such as this surely the photographic quality should be beyond reproach.

"Danse Macabre": a really wonderful example of care and patience. The animation was particularly smooth and free from all 'jerkiness.'

"Our Daily Bread": from Mr. John Martin one has learned to expect first-class photography and technique and in this film his usual high standard is shown, but the one over-powering impression which dominated my mind throughout was: "What a waste of good colour film on such a subject!" The opening shots of cornfields and harvesting were beautiful and fully justified the use of colour—but to waste:

it on inside shots in a bake-house... Generally speaking, the film was too much like the professional advertising "shorts" to be interesting to amateur cine enthusiasts.

"Early Bird": the same remarks apply to this as to "What a Night." It was very well done and thought out and proved as popular with the audience as any film in the show.

"The Miracle": now we come to the last and probably the most criticised film in the show. Personally, the whole film appealed to me very much. Of course, the technique and photography were above reproach, and from the point of view of production, the makers have almost reached professional standards and their sets were really wonderful for a body of amateur producers. The mistake made was that the story was not at all clear... I could not read some of the titles, owing to the silly habit (also common to some professional films) of showing light lettering on a light-toned background. The business of a title is to be read; then why not make it as legible as possible? Without explanation the early part of the film was incomprehensible and it was quite impossible to grasp the relation of the various characters to one another. Nevertheless, the film was very well done indeed and I think Ace Movies have got a real treasure in the young lady who played the 'star' role. She is almost a second Elizabeth Bergner. Her facial expression in the last scene, after handing her baby over to the Virgin Mary, was beautifully rendered—not one girl in 500 could have done it.

Sale, Cheshire.

BASIL H. REYNOLDS.

"THEY STOLE THE SHOW"

ALTHOUGH it is now rather late in the day, I should like to give you this brief idea of my opinions of the "Ten Best" show.

"What a Night" and "Early Bird" stole the show. Both were so natural, in settings and action, that sympathy with the characters was established right at the start. I felt this particularly with "Early Bird," since my own morning excursions are invariably attended by such accidents as befell that harassed little man.

As a 9.5mm. user myself, I was glad to see that we had a showing this year. "Sunday Morning" was quite a bright, well-made little film, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I found "Refugio" rather dull, though this may be my fault, since I have seen several professional films on similar subjects and been bored on each occasion. Why do producers so rarely introduce humour into this type of film?

The two colour films were excellent as regards photography. "Everybody's Birds," however, seemed to contain far too many titles. I think this is the type of film which would be improved by substituting a sound commentary for the titles. "Our Daily Bread" served as a contrast, and demonstrated the fact that for this type of documentary, which needs frequent explanation, a spoken commentary is essential.

"Danse Macabre" was a welcome change. Although naturally not up to Disney's standard, it was remarkably well-done, the movement being free from that jerkiness which spoils some of the professional efforts.

As for "The Miracle"—well, the miracle to me is that this film should win the Society plaque, or can it be that the standard of

(Continued on next page)

Cine Club Promotes Novel Exhibition

HOW to interest non-technical visitors is often a problem at cine club guest nights. They like to see your films but they cannot join in the usually 'technical' conversation and are apt to go away feeling "out of it" and disappointed. As a result, they do not become members and never learn at all.

The problem was solved by the Watford Society by the showing of a series of simple showcards describing the first principles of filming, and the basic apparatus, such as a camera and tripod, a small projector, titling letters and one or two lights. All the showcards were lettered in this manner: "This is the camera," "These are the lights," etc.

One showed the difference in the picture seen by one-inch and three-inch lenses. It had drawings of the lenses alongside prints of matched size, that of the three-inch lens showing the centre of the picture seen by the one-inch lens. The drawings of the lenses matched the lenses on view on the camera.

Surprise For Visitors

Another card showed a strip of raw film and a strip of printed positive, together with appropriate captions. It is surprising how many "well I nevers" came from people who have never before set eyes on undeveloped film! Yet another carried a drawing of a pendulum, together with a strip containing exactly sixteen frames. The heading was "in one second—sixteen films are taken."

There was also a card headed: "These are the lights," which showed, by means of wash drawings, the difference in light quality and shadows when a spot-light and a flood-light are used. This and the "sixteen a second" card created most interest. Surprisingly few people know, even now, why movies move.

Some of the cards are reproduced in column 3. The hundred or so visitors to the Club during the anniversary celebrations were all keenly interested, but what was perhaps more important from the secretary's point of view was the fact that instead of asking him questions when he was hurrying round in small circles, the visitors simply browsed in the miniature exhibition. A number afterwards remarked that they had learnt something from the exhibition that they did not know before, and the secretary is certain that several undecided "prospects" finally made up their minds to join as a result of having looked around in peace. D.T.

An interesting series of A.R.P. films is available from Film Editorial Service, 94, Wardour Street, W.1. A.R.P. organisations and municipal bodies can view them, by appointment, at the above address.



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Letters to the Editor

(Continued from previous page)

Society productions is deplorably low? Being unfamiliar with the plot of "The Miracle," I found this production difficult to follow. A few titles would undoubtedly have helped, if only to introduce the characters. At first, I was confused by the appearance of the second male character, taking him to be the first without his spectacles. It was not until both of them appeared in the same scene that I realised what was happening.

Still, altogether it was a very good show, better than I usually get in the "ninepennies," and I hope to see many more of them, in happier conditions than those we are facing now.

Hendon, N.W.9.

C. R. LIVINGSTONE.

HIGHER STANDARD ?

THIS year it appeared to me that photographically the standard was very much higher than in previous years—particularly so in the 9.5mm. film "Sunday Morning," which I give first place. It is most gratifying to find one's favourite film showing up so well. Good monochrome has colour beaten to a frazzle.

I am sorry I cannot agree with you about "The Miracle." I was quite baffled as to what it was all about and was almost shocked by certain parts of it. Absolute nonsense from start to finish, for me.

The primary reason for my possessing a cine camera is to film my family, and I am sure that the majority of camera owners have no interest in making film plays. To my mind this is no sphere for the amateur. I should like to see a family film among the "Ten Best" next year. A plot just to introduce the family savours so much of artificiality and I want to see what can be done with 300 feet of film on one's summer holiday.

In my estimation, photographic quality is the first essential. If a film is not exposed just right, or if it is carelessly processed (by no means uncommon) it is tiresome at once.

East Sheen, S.W.14.

A. D. STOKES.

WELCOME FOR 9.5 mm.

I MUST say that it was an excellent show at Film House and I was particularly glad that some 9.5 mm. films were included in the programme this year, as I am a 9.5 mm. amateur myself.

"Sunday Morning" was very good; I liked the Tower Bridge scenes—the cutting was good here. The film covered a great deal of ground, but I thought that the quality seemed to fall off towards the end. "Refugio" was first-rate, the cutting fast and expressive. I liked the dramatic effect produced when the bomber flew overhead and the expressions on the faces of the children. Fast cutting together with the sound effects gave me a real thrill.

Of the colour films shown, I think the best was "Everybody's Birds," although some of the shots were on the pinky side. The close-ups were wonderful. In the film "Our Daily Bread," while the colour did justice to the outdoor scenes, I thought it was rather a waste on all those interior shots.

The recorded commentary ran very smoothly, its best point being that there was not too much of it.

Brixton Hill, S.W.2.

R. C. F. PURLAND.

ELECTRICAL SYNCHRONISING

THE following note on electrical synchronising, as described some time ago in *Amateur Cine World*, may be of interest to your readers who have experienced the same trouble.

For a long time I was unable to make the system work satisfactorily, particularly when starting up. Providing the projector had been running for a short time, the turntable and projector would keep in step, but after a further period of running they would again fall out of step. The trouble was finally traced to the resistance, which is made of carbon or some such material, which, on warming up, appeared to decrease in resistance. Replacing the resistance with a transformer completely cured the trouble, and the system now works well.

Marikuppam, Mysore.

L. H. MCLAGGAN.

CINE SOCIETY MAGAZINES

THE article on cine society magazines in your May issue represents a most inadequate survey of this subject and is, therefore, not only likely to be misleading, but is definitely unfair to a number of societies in Britain who produce their own magazines or news bulletins. Your contributor has almost entirely devoted his space to reviewing two magazines from colonial societies, and only mentions briefly one English bulletin.

It is only equitable to place on record the fact that there are quite a number of societies in the British Isles which publish their own journals. The writer, having studied this branch of publicity over a considerable period, can call to mind several societies which turn out their own 'News' in some form or another—apart from the modest effort of the Finchley Amateur Cine Society, whose unpretentious "Monthly Circular" is now in its seventh year, having appeared regularly each month throughout this period. No 'record' is claimed for this, but it certainly would be interesting to hear more from other society magazine editors as to their achievements in this field.

(Finchley A.C.S.)

ARTHUR H. GREEN.

(The article in question was not intended as a survey of cine society magazines but as a review of a few that happened to have been received recently. We are always pleased to publish extracts from club magazines, but it will be appreciated that a news sheet alone has little interest to the general reader.—EDITOR.)

8mm. SPLICING

I WAS greatly interested in Mr. G. V. Lawrie's method of splicing 8mm. film (June issue); it is excellent. I am sure that others who try it will be as anxious as I am to hear from the manufacturer who will produce a splicer suitable for this improved method.

Torquay.

GRAHAM HUNT, L.D.S.

Club Notes

Reports and stills for the August issue of "Amateur Cine World" should reach us not later than June 27th.

A handsome plaque will be awarded for the best Society film made this year and submitted to us for review. The plaque is so designed that it can be hung in the studio or theatre if desired.

Central C.S.

(Hon. Sec.: J. Fuller, 13, Brentwood Lodge, Hendon).

Already far advanced are plans for the first production by a new society in Hendon, N.W.4: the Central C.S. It will be a sound film, *Leicester Galleries Crime*. Members are steadily being recruited and the secretary will be glad to hear from interested readers. The social section has been active recently organising functions to raise funds for the production.

Gainsborough C.S.

(Hon. Sec.: E. Hiley, "News" Office, Gainsborough).

Within a fortnight of being formed, the Gainsborough C.S. has given a public display of films; given 350 A.R.P. workers a show of A.R.P. films; arranged a show to the troops and decided to produce a film.

Gainsborough C.S., brought into existence by Mr. E. Hiley, Editor of the local newspaper, has as its president Dr. J. P. O'Keeffe, who has been taking films since 1925. His interest was learned when the police called him in to put through a film which was thought to hold something of special interest to them.

The officials elected at the inaugural meeting, when a list of rules was laid down and the society placed on a firm footing, have all had experience of camera work, most of them of some years standing. Regular weekly meetings are now the order, with a rapidly growing membership. The production committee, with remarkable scope of outdoor scenery for their first film, are considering two suggestions: A film about a shop girl who became a Land Army Girl, and a film on A.R.P. They are in communication with the Censor about the latter.

Hyde C.S.

(Hon. Sec.: G. Wain, 170, Dawson Road, Hyde, Cheshire).

Some excellent films from the Federation library were enjoyed at a recent projection meeting. Speaking of libraries, the Hyde Public Librarian has compiled for members a list of all the books on still and cine photography which he has available, with a request for further suggestions—a favour which was much appreciated. The sixth annual general meeting of the society, to be preceded by a dinner, will be held shortly.

Mercury Film Productions

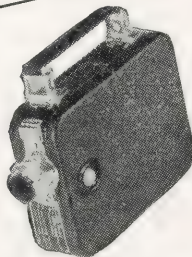
(Hon. Sec.: Ivor G. Reading, 11, Oakfield Road, Stroud Green, N.4).

Work is now proceeding on a script for a comedy and new members will be very welcome. The club is making arrangements for its first outing—probably to a West End theatre.

(Continued on next page)

NOW IS THE TIME TO BUY A CINE CAMERA

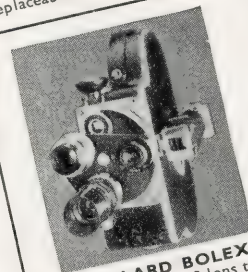
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16mm. Kodak Model "K", f/1.9 lens, cost £30 ... £19 10 0
16mm. Ensign Super Kinacam, 3 lens turret, f/2.6 Cinar, cost approx. £35 0 0 ... £16 10 0
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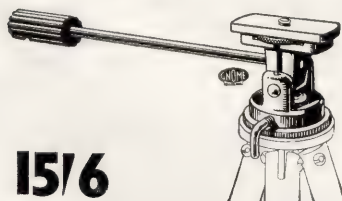
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Club Notes

(Continued from previous page)

North Birmingham A.C.S.

(Hon. Sec.: G. A. Hall, 6, Pereira Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17).

During the coming weeks members will be engaged in shooting a 9.5mm. film dealing with civilian life in war-time. The script has been approved and will require some 250 feet of stock. Shooting will be done by groups of members, each group tackling a certain section of the script.

Planet A.F.S.

(Hon. Sec.: H. Roger Dale, 72, Wellington Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middlesex. Meetings: Every Monday evening at 8.15 p.m. at the studio—85, Green Lanes, Palmers Green, N.13).

In production: *The Great Plague* (16mm. neg.-pos.). Now that all preparation work is complete, interior scenes are rapidly being shot. The first "throw away" sets were very simple, thus allowing the art department to spend more time in preparing the more elaborate settings which will be required later. Exterior work is more difficult than usual, because of the large number of costumes and special 'props' which must be taken along. A breakdown script of each scene, however, proves extremely valuable in this direction, for it gives complete details of these needs for each occasion.

A party of ten Planet members were entertained recently by United Film Productions, of Barnes, when *Refuge* and a 1,200 ft. reel of film exposed by U.F.P. members were screened. Although they are without a studio at the moment, United Films have a very comfortable projection theatre, and were able to show an intriguing looking camera which might be described by Damon Runyon as "more than somewhat."

It was an ironic coincidence that during that screening of *Refuge*, which shows the bombardment and German occupation of Le Cateau, the same thing was actually happening for the second time.

Sale & Stretford F.S.

(Hon. Sec.: A. Ball, 53, Woodhouse Lane, Sale).

Shooting is now in full swing on *Tom's Secret*. All interiors have been built in the studios, and the result is very successful, the cameraman insisting on back lighting.

Sunday evening projection has been suspended for the summer; the time will be devoted to filming. The documentary section are making a film on behalf of a local authority; when completed it should be of considerable educational value. Filming will also begin shortly on a script based on the early history of Sale; it will deal with various changes that have taken place up to the present day.

The president, G. England, opened the series of talks with a description of titling on positive film; this was followed by an interesting lantern lecture given by Mr. Holt, who demonstrated the method of making the slides. Over 20 members saw the A.C.W. "Ten Best" selection in Manchester. To some members this was a new experience. Older members remarked on the advance that had been made in amateur films.

The society's programme includes talks on film construction and the making of cartoon films. Two competitions are running at the moment, one for the best still taken since the war and the other for the best 200 ft. of 9.5mm. Competition is very keen.

New premises, which are proving very suitable, were obtained recently and a number of new members, most of whom are experienced cine workers, were secured.

Southend-on-Sea 9.5 C.C.

(Hon. Sec.: J. C. Scott, 106, Southborough Road, Southend-on-Sea).

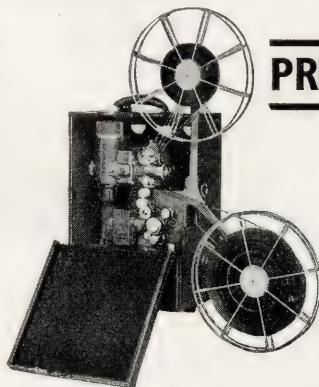
Attendance and activities of the club continue to be satisfactory. They are now producing a burlesque on "Babes in the Wood." This is under the direction of a comparatively new member and is providing considerable entertainment. Talent has also been discovered in the direction of scene painting. A mottled stone-coloured wall-paper is being used as a base and the design is painted with water stain. It has photographed very well indeed. The studio now looks at present like a medieval castle!

Projection evenings are in abeyance for the time being, but it is hoped to have a show in the near future before settling down to the summer schedule.

Stoke-on-Trent A.C.S.

(Hon. Sec.: H. T. Morfe, 51, Beresford Crescent, Newcastle, Staffs.).

Members' successes in the Scottish Festival were: 1, Alfred Hitchcock Cup and £10 to Mr. Bowyer for his *Two Hours to Wait*; 2, A "Highly Commended" to



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Mr. Martin for *Our Daily Bread*. Mr. Bowyer's success is outstanding as his film is a first attempt. Mr. Martin's is a slight improvement on last year.

"The highlight of the period under review," the club writes, "was the 'Ten Best' show in Manchester. A party of members made the journey and voted the selection shown the best since these public presentations began. *The Miracle* was the most 'professional-amateur' film ever seen. It created considerable discussion over the dinner table that evening. But Ace Movies' films invariably do that."

United Film Productions

(Publicity Manager: D. Densham, 5, Madrid Road, Barnes, S.W.13).

Members of the Planet A.F.S. visited the club recently, when their film, *Refuge*, was shown to a sound accompaniment arranged by Ray Densham.

Production of the club's anti-Nazi film, *Adventure for Two*, is now well under way. Story concerns the adventures of two young Englishmen who find themselves somewhere in the German Black Forest at the commencement of the war.

Applications for membership should be made at the above address; war-time subscriptions are now reduced to two shillings per month.

Wallasey A.C.C.

(Prog. Sec.: H. C. Tristram, 2, Dinmore Road, Wallasey).

Public Film Show

(Continued from page 114)

Of course, with only one turntable available you will be unable to keep up a continuous sound accompaniment, but nevertheless you will find it possible to build up some vivid effects even with only one turntable. At the same time, it will, to some extent, simplify your problems, for every one of your changes will necessarily be a complete one from one record to another. A volume control will avoid the necessity for sudden cutting out and cutting in of sound at full volume.

If your projector has a microphone pick-up attachment, we strongly advise that you should include a microphone in the equipment. It is a first-class piece of showmanship to be able to make your announcements through the loudspeaker, but be certain that they are clear. You can only be sure of this by practice and with the aid of a candid friend.

The microphones which are used are not unduly sensitive, as they are designed to avoid picking up unwanted machine noises. You can therefore talk quite closely into them. But learn *how* to talk into them. With many microphones it is preferable to talk across the front rather than directly into them. Also, you must learn to maintain the same relative distance and volume of sound all the time you are talking into the microphone. Changes of position or direction can be detected by violent changes in the volume of emitted sound, while wrong technique will manifest itself in degraded mushy speech and blasting from time to time.

A correct microphone technique is not difficult to acquire, but is definitely worth the acquisition. If you happen to be one of those fairly rare unfortunates who are entirely

Members are thoroughly enjoying making the film, *Carry On*, which deals with the activities of the club and its members during war-time and will certainly be an interesting record. They are still busy giving shows to service clubs, canteens, first aid posts, etc. In fact, the mobile unit is out practically every week. A film show given to the old people at Tranmere Institution was very well received.

Wimbledon C.C.

(Hon. Sec.: J. Symes, 8, Bronson Road, W. Wimbledon, S.W.19).

At the A.G.M. held recently it was agreed that the re-election of the present officers *en bloc* would be the most satisfactory course and members voted accordingly. The club is meeting once a month during the summer, as in previous years, the day suggested being the last Saturday in every month. The first of the summer meetings was held on May 25th; particulars of further meetings can be obtained from the hon. sec.

It is hoped to go into production on an outdoor film in the near future. The title of the film has not yet been decided, but the story has been submitted by Tim Scollard, who was responsible for the making of "The Rabbit," which film was awarded a Federation Certificate of Merit.

unsuited to microphone work, it is better to bow to the inevitable.

As far as speech itself is concerned, you will probably have some nasty shocks. Small peculiarities of speech will appear to have been magnified many times, and should be eliminated if possible. Do not, however, go in for affected speech. Good honest English, plainly pronounced without mannerisms, is acceptable anywhere. It is a good plan to record your voice on a disc at one of the places open for this purpose and to play the record back to yourself from time to time. It will keep you from becoming too 'uppish' about your powers as a commentator, and will act as a salutary corrective.

ELECTRIC FITTING

We have received from Ensign, Ltd., a new fitting which will be of interest to all those who are concerned with the fitting up of cine lighting units. The well-known batten lampholder has already been used extensively in building up lighting 'battens' or banks, but has had the limitation that the lamp must always remain at right angles to the surface to which it is attached.

The Ensign Adjustable Batten Lampholder is much more flexible. It is constructed of brown bakelite, and its base screws to the supporting surface in the usual way. The lampholder itself is, however, free to move through an angle of 90 degrees so that the lamp may lie perpendicular to or parallel with the supporting surface or at any desired angle between, and may be held at that angle by means of a locking ring.

With the aid of these holders several lamps in reflectors might be connected to a common batten or other support, but turned in various directions to ensure more adequate distribution of the light-flood over the area of the subject to be filmed. The price is 1s. 9d. per holder.

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Super 9mm. Reels, automatic film clip, list 3/6, unused, 2/7. Humicans list 2/6, 1/9. Below.

Vox Pathe Talkie, £65, absolutely unmarked, £45. Gorse, 86, Accrington Road, Blackburn.

Siemens F, 16mm., 1.5 lens, 4 speed and single pictures. Cassette loading. New condition. Bargain. £27 10s. Phillips, 357, New Cross Road, S.E.14.

16mm. Equipment, latest H.16 Paillard Bolex Camera, 1in. f/1.3, 3in. f/2.9 lenses, leather case, Siemens Home Model Projector. Lumaplak 40 x 30 in. Crystal Bead Screen. Craig Splicer. Cheap. Smethers, 5, Links Drive, N.20.

Dekko 1.9 Dallmeyer Filter, hood, case, £9 7 6. "Celfix" Silver Screen, 52 x 40, perfect order, slightly marked, list £6 17 6, £3 7 6. Bound copies "A.C.W." 1935-1939 inclusive, 27/6. D. Thompson, Rosebank, Royds Avenue, Accrington.

16mm., 35mm. Cinematograph Films. Amateur offers cheap. Stamp list. Ward, 13, Forfield Place Leamington Spa.

Pathoscope Vox Talkie Outfit, complete, quite new, £40. Leather, Heath Lane, Stourbridge.

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YOUR PROBLEMS SOLVED

All replies are sent by post. Please remember to enclose a stamped addressed envelope with your query.

MOONLIGHT EFFECTS

J.V., Paignton.—Moonlight effects in professional films are generally made on a special form of stock, but a close approximation can be secured by amateurs through the use of a red-sensitive stock, such as supersensitive type panchromatic film, and holding back the sky with a deep orange or red filter. This type of filter, which suppresses the blue of the sky, generally needs an increase in exposure of about 8 times, i.e., 3 stops' increase; if, however, there is slight under-exposure, i.e., instead of opening up the lens aperture by 3 stops, it is increased only by 2 stops, the effect is usually better. It will be obvious that a clear blue sky only must show in the camera field, as clouds will merely be intensified by this procedure.

FLARE RINGS ON FILM

P.A.L.B., Cambridge.—The rings on your film are due to lens flare. This effect is occasionally very marked with lenses of large aperture, the degree depending upon the lens construction, number of glass components and their shape, etc. There is nothing that can be done about it except to avoid using the lens against the light too much and where it is necessary, to use a good deep lens-hood properly blacked internally. You might check, by looking into the lens, whether any of the internal blacking is missing, but do not take the lens apart.

STROBOSCOPIC CHECKS

K.A.B., Newport.—The usual place for a stroboscopic disc on the projector is on the sprocket shaft, or stuck on the face of the sprocket itself. This disc only provides a check on the correct speed of the projector, though, and does not ensure that the projector and the turntable will remain in step. A mechanical or electro-mechanical synchronising method, such as has already been described in *Amateur Cine World*, is desirable.

8mm. EFFECT TITLES

I enclose a sample of 8mm. title in which the objects in the background appear to be diffused. Would you suggest that this is done by double exposure, with the objects slightly off focus, taken against a dark background? Using my Prism Gate Magnifier I can obtain any similar type of set up, and double expose.—H.L.B., Camberley.

The method you suggest for obtaining double-exposure effects is a perfectly feasible one. The out-of-focus effect, however, may also be obtained by making a duplicate in a contact printing machine, with the master-copy of the diffused objects behind the title original. As the object original is separated from the new stock being printed by the thickness of the title film, it will, of necessity, be slightly diffused. There is no reason, however, why you should not obtain the same effect by double-exposure, making the diffused object exposure at an incorrect focussing distance, or by the use of a focussing glass, or soft-focus lens, such as the "Duto."

Cartooning Made Easier

(Continued from page 123)

Focus a still picture of the walking or running person on to the top sheet, and rapidly sketch, round the picture, the main lines of the figure. Remove the top sheet, pull the film down for one frame through the projector gate, and again sketch round the figure. Repeat this, numbering each drawing in order, until the complete sequence of two steps has been drawn.

Now study the result. It may be found that two adjacent drawings are identical in several instances. In each of these cases only one of the drawings is needed, but remember to write on it "2 frames."

Film and project this series of sketches, and you will be surprised at the result—agreeably surprised, I mean! Bear in mind that a study of these drawings will put you definitely on the way to the correct timing of your future drawings, and that the use of the projector will not be necessary when you get into the way of it.

Just one final point. Suppose, as is often the case, the projected figure will not focus sharply; perhaps a limb, owing to its rapid motion, is blurred in outline. Here my advice is—make your drawing also blurred in the same place! Whether this is right or wrong is a debatable point, and perhaps some reader can enlighten me. But it is as

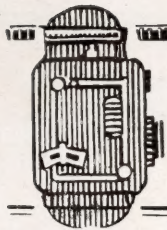
difficult to justify as it is to explain why a perfectly sharp picture can be produced on the screen by a whole series of blurred frames!

PROJECTION ACCESSORY

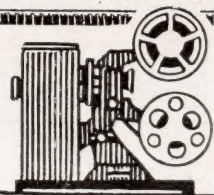
Name. Ensign 16mm. Film Grip.
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Description. This is a simple device with a multiple purpose. It consists of a spring metal strip bent up at both ends, of such length that it will just fit between the flanges of a 16mm. film projection spool without slipping. The centre portion is equipped with a small tongue by which it can be clipped to the film. The makers suggest that it should be used (a) clipped to the outer end of a film and pushed down in the spool to prevent the film unwinding, and (b) to make an emergency temporary oin during projection and when editing. We also suggest that it could be used to speed up threading of the film on to a spool, the end being fastened to the clip which is then pushed down to the centre of the spool. This will prove particularly useful when the slit in the core of the spool has become closed as the result of use.

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